

HAVEN OF SERENITY



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Contents

INTRODUCTION	10
THE LOVE FOR ANONYMITY	14
TRUST IN ALLAH	14
THE PRICE OF DIVINE LOVE	14
DIVINE FEAR	15
THREE ADVICES	15
VAIN HOPE	16
GOLD AND SILVER	16
AN EVIL DEATH	17
MAALIK BIN DINAR'S FEAR	17
THE REWARD OF MAALIK BIN DINAR	18
HABEEB AJMI SACRIFICES HIS DESIRE	18
RAABIAH'S ABSORPTION IN DIVINE LOVE	19
AN ATTITUDE OF LOVE FOR THE WORLD	19
RAABIAH ON HER WAY TO HAJJ	19
RAABIAH'S NOCTURNAL OCCUPATION	20
THE VALUE OF THIKRULLAH	20
RAABIAH ON HER DEATHBED	21
ABSTENTION FROM MUSHTABAH	21
RAABIAH'S SOUL TAKES FLIGHT	22
FUDHAIL'S NASEEHAT TO KHALIFAH HAARUN RASHID	22
THOSE WHO FEAR ALLAH	23
WISE COUNSEL OF FUDHAIL	23
DEPRIVED FROM DIVINE PROXIMITY	24
OCCASIONS OF SERENITY	24
BOYCOTT	25
A DIVINE OFFICIAL	26
IBRAAHIM ADHAM'S FOUR MOUNTS	26
THE QABRUSTAN IS THE CITY	26
WHY DUAS ARE NOT ACCEPTED	27

IN SEARCH OF HALAAL RIZQ.....	28
IBRAAHIM BIN ADHAM OBSERVES THE QUDRAT OF ALLAH.....	29
THE EVIL OF GHEEBAT	30
ALLAH IS SUFFICIENT	30
THE LOFTIEST STATION – BAABUSH SHAMS ...	31
ADMONITION AND ADVICE OF BISHR HAAFI...	32
A HYPOCRITE LEARNS HIS LESSON.....	33
THREE CATEGORIES OF FUQARA.....	35
DUA IN GRIEF	35
THE EFFECT OF BISHR’S NASEEHAT	36
SERVICE TO THE POOR IS SUPERIOR TO 100 HAJJ	36
THE BARE-FOOTED BISHR.....	37
THE KARAAMAT OF BISHR HAAFI.....	37
HADHRAT BISHR AFTER HIS MAUT.....	38
GOOD CHARACTER.....	38
THE STATUS OF PIETY	38
THE QABR	39
A SHOW-OFF AND A THIEF	39
RIDHA’ OF ALLAH	39
THE LOST PROPERTY OF THE MU’MIN.....	39
A WISEMAN, A WEALTHY MAN, AN INTELLIGENT MAN, A SAINT AND A MISER.....	40
THREE BOUNTIES AND THREE CALAMITIES	41
THE VALUE OF THE GUEST	41
THE BARKAT OF HIS BODY	41
THE HUMILITY OF THE LION.....	42
A PIOUS PRINCESS.....	43
IBRAAHEEM – KHALILULLAH	44
A LESSON IN HUMILITY	45
SHAH SHUJA’S ADMONITION.....	46

SERVING THE NEEDY	47
LOVE FOR SOLITUDE AND ANONYMITY	47
ABSTENTION FROM MUSHTABAH	48
A LESSON OF CONTENTMENT.....	48
FEAR FOR MAUT	50
THE REWARD OF SERENITY AND PLEASURE ...	50
RISE AND FALL IN THE SPIRITUAL REALM.....	51
THE REWARD OF DIVINE VISION	52
HAPPY OCCASIONS OF SERENITY.....	52
THE REWARD OF MORE THAN 100 HAJJ.....	54
THE SECRET OF FAQEERI.....	55
THE NOOR OF THIKRULLAAH.....	56
THE EFFECT OF THIKRULLAAH.....	56
THE SUPPLICATION OF BAAYAZID.....	57
SLAYED BY DIVINE LOVE.....	58
REWARDED WITH THE TREASURE OF IMAAN..	59
A DEVOTEE OF ALLAH	60
THE FEAR OF ALLAH SUFFICES	60
A GARDEN OF JANNAT	61
ALLAH REPAYS MUNIFICENTLY	61
IBN MUBAARAK’S UNADULTERATED HONESTY	61
THE CALL OF THE DAMSELS OF JANNAT	62
THE MEANING OF TAWAADHU’	63
FOUR ADVICES.....	63
FOUR NOBLE MEN.....	64
THE ‘SICKNESS’ OF DIVINE LOVE.....	64
FOUR MEASURES FOR DIVINE PLEASURE.....	65
GO TO YOUR ABODE!	65
THE BOUNTIES OF POVERTY	66
A HIDDEN WALI	66
THE KHALIFAH’S DREAM	67

PROCLAMATION OF THE HAQQ.....	68
ADVICES OF IMAAM ABU HANIFAH	68
THE TAQWA OF IMAAM ABU HANIFAH	69
A TRUE AND AFFECTIONATE FRIEND	70
THE SECLUSION OF DAAWOOD TAAI.....	70
THE INHERITANCE OF DAAWOOD TAAI	70
ISTIGHNA' AND OBEDIENCE TO MOTHER.....	71
ADMONITION FOR THE KHALIFAH	72
DUA FOR THE TRANSGRESSORS	73
BE CONTENTED AND GRATEFUL	74
MA'ROOF KARKHI AND ALLAH'S VISION	74
A ROBBER AND MA'ROOF KARKHI'S SUPPLICATION	75
THE SELECT DEVOTEES OF ALLAH.	75
THE EFFECT OF DESIRE	76
HONEST TRADERS	77
HONOURING A SAYYID – THE TRANSFORMATION AND ELEVATION OF JUNAID BAGHDAADI	78
WHO IS A BAKHEEL	80
BASELESS SUSPICION.....	81
MEETING MUNKAR AND NAKEER	82
THE REWARD OF MERCY IS MERCY – MERCY FOR A BIRD	82
HUMAN BEINGS – SHAITAAN'S APPRAISAL	83
RESTRAINING THE EVIL GAZE	84
EFFECT OF IBAADAT AND DUA.....	84
THE EFFECT OF IMAAN – A YAHUDI'S CONVERSION.....	84
A GUIDE IN THE WILDERNESS	86
TRUE LOVE IS WITH ONLY ALLAH	87
A WALI IS APPREHENDED.....	88

THE DEGREES OF TAWAKKUL	88
ORCHARD OF THE JINN	89
THE JUNGLE OF THE SNAKES	91
IBRAAHIM'S LOFTY STANDARD OF TAWAKKUL	92
CONVERSION OF A FIRE-WORSHIPPER	92
THE SOUL OF KNOWLEDGE.....	94
DEPRIVATION AND HUMILIATION.....	94
THE BALM OF THE HEART	94
WRAPPED IN DIVINE LOVE.....	95
THE INSANITY OF LOVE.....	96
THE INTOXICATION OF DIVINE LOVE	96
EXTINGUISHING THE LAMP OF MA'RIFAT	97
HADHRAT UMAR AND HIS NAFS	97
HADHRAT UMAR AND THE RIVER NILE	100
IMPORTANCE OF SALAAT	103
A LION BECOMES THE GUIDE	104
A HAWAARI OF NABI ISAA (ALAYHIS SALAAM) MEETS THE SAHAABAH OF RASULULLAH (SALLALLAHU ALAYHI WASALLAM).....	105
HADHRAT UMAR'S JUSTICE.....	106
THE EFFECT OF JUSTICE	106
THE CAPTIVITY OF HADHRAT SAEED BIN JUBAIR	107
THE CALAMITY OF COMPLAINT	108
DIVINE AID FOR A PROCLAIMER OF THE HAQQ	109
HADHRAT SAHL AND THE BEAR.....	110
HADHRAT SAHL'S WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE	111
TAUHEED SAVES A KING	112
THE CONSEQUENCE OF ABUSING AMAANAT	113
DATES AND THORNS	114

THE POVERTY OF THE AULIYA	114
THE VIRTUE OF DUROOD SHAREEF.....	115
A CHRISTIAN EMBRACES ISLAM.....	115
THE FLYING OF AN AARIFAH	116
THE IBAADAT OF A SAYYID.....	117
RASULULLAH (SALLALLAHU ALAYHI WASALLAM) SENDS A GIFT.....	119
THE MYSTERY OF IBRAAHIM KIRMAANI.....	119
AN AABID'S DESIRE IS FULFILLED	123
A FAQEER'S DEMAND.....	125
THE SINCERE REPENTER AND THE ADMONISHING RIVER	126
THE WEALTHY BUZRUG	127
GHEEBAT IS HARAAM	127
THE HABSHI BUZRUG	128
THE VALUE OF THE AULIYA	129
MIRACULOUS AFFIRMATION OF FORGIVENESS	130
THE KARAAMAT OF SHAIKH DAAMGHAABI..	130
AID FROM THE UNSEEN	132
A SHAIKH IS REPRIMANDED	132
THE VALUABLE DIRHAM.....	133
RABI' BIN SULAIMAN'S HAJJ IN THE HEARTS OF THE FUQARA	134
SAVED FROM THE LION'S MOUTH.....	138
A WONDERFUL EPISODE OF ALLAH'S PROTECTION.....	138
IBRAAHIM KHAWWAAS AND KHIDHR.....	140
RASULULLAH'S REMEDY	140
THE SEVEN FIRE-WORSHIPPERS.....	141
SULTAN SHAMS	141
THE DAM IN THE JUG.....	142

MIRACULOUS CROSSING OF THE RIVER	142
AN IDOLATER BECOMES A MUSLIM.....	143
AN ATHEIST ASTRONOMER EMBRACES ISLAM	144
A SADHU EMBRACES ISLAM.....	145
A MALICIOUS SADHU IS PUNISHED.....	147
THE ROOH OF TASAWWUF	147
EFFECT OF DISOBEDIENCE.....	148
ANONYMITY	148
SOUL-SEARCHING	148
THE CONSEQUENCES OF AN EVIL GAZE	148
CASH COMPENSATION	149
SIGN OF AN ACCEPTED TAUBAH	150
HONOUR AND DISGRACE.....	150
GRATITUDE FOR THIKR	150
PAINFUL REMINDER OF THIKR.....	151
MAGNANIMITY	151
THE SWORD OF THIKR.....	152
THE CALAMITY OF DIVERSION FROM ALLAH	152
ALLAH ARRANGED THE JANAAZAH OF A DEVOTEE.....	152
ELIMINATION OF AQL	153
THE SALAAM OF FEMALES	153
A TRUE AALIM	153
REFUSING A SINCERE GIFT	153
ABSTAIN FROM THREE PERSONS.....	154
WISDOM FOR THE AGE.....	154
INTELLECTUAL DESTRUCTION	154
EXCESS ENGROSSMENT IN ILM-E-ZAAHIR	155
VALUE THE TAUFEEQ.....	156
A LADY’S UNADULTERATED SINCERITY	156



INTRODUCTION

*“Everything which We narrate to you (O Muhammad!)
of the episodes of the Rusul (Messengers) is that
with which We fortify your heart.”
(Qur’aan)*

The Qur’aan Majeed is replete with the episodes and stories of the Ambiya and Auliya of bygone times. A salient feature of the Qur’aan Majeed is its inimitable style of repetition of the same episode a number of times with slight variations in the wording. The objective of repeating the stories of the Ambiya is for absorption by the heart imbued with Imaan. Repeated narration of the episodes of the Ambiya and Auliya cultivates in the heart of the Mu’min an aversion for this transitory worldly abode and an attraction towards the goals of the Akhirah.

The purpose of the episodes and anecdotes of the Ambiya and the Auliya is to kindle the faculty of *Tafakkur* (reflection and contemplation) so that man meditates on the creation of Allah Ta’ala to reach Him. Thus the Qur’aan Majeed commands:

*“Narrate to them the stories (of the Ambiya and Auliya)
so that they reflect.”*

Someone asked Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi (rahmatullah alayh): “What benefit do the Muredeen derive from the narration of the episodes of the Auliya?” Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi (rahmatullah alayh) replied: “The stories of the Auliya are among the Armies of Allah Azza Wa Jal. These anecdotes strengthen the hearts and bring peace to them.” In substantiation, Hadhrat Junaid (rahmatullah alayh) recited the Qur’aanic aayat:

“Everything We narrate to you from the episodes of the Rusul is that with which We strengthen your heart.”

Reading the stories of the Auliya is a wonderful generator of spiritual enthusiasm. Readers will find the spiritual practices of the former Auliya to be exceptionally severe in austerity. It is obvious that the rank and file of the Ummah – in fact even the Ulama and Mashaaikh of this era – especially in this day of moral decadence and spiritual bankruptcy, are not expected to emulate in exactitude the austerity and renunciation practised by the Auliya of former times. The purpose of these episodes is to engender in the heart an inclination towards the Deen, an understanding of the futility and deception of worldly comforts and pleasures, and a concern of the Aakhirah. With this understanding and concern, the Mu'min will engage in preparations for the inevitable Journey into the Aakhirah which commences with the advent of Maut.

So while we are not expected to emulate the extreme measures of austerity and renunciation of the former Auliya, we are expected to walk in their shadow so that practising the Sunnah of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) does not appear to be an onerous task. For example, Hadhrat Sufyaan Thauri (rahmatullah alayh), on the day of his demise, made Wudhu 60 times. Due to extreme physical weakness and indisposition he was unable to maintain his Wudhu for any length of time. He could not bear the notion of his Rooh departing from his body while he was without Wudhu. Now when we read such a narration, we gain the understanding of Rasulullah's ta'leem pertaining to perpetual Wudhu. He said: *“Wudhu is the weapon of the Mu'min.”* The

Mu'min is expected to be with his weapon at all times. He is surrounded by enemies – physical and spiritual enemies.

We are not expected to adopt the extreme measures of food reduction of the Auliya. They would not eat or drink for days. They were capable of travelling on foot through the desert without food and water for many days. While we are not expected to emulate the severity of their austerity, we are expected to gain inspiration from their abstinence and practise in accordance with the Sunnah which commands that we do not over-eat; that we do not eat to satiation; that we abstain from mushtabah (doubtful food); that we keep Nafl fasts. Similarly in all fields of life. We acquire inspiration, enthusiasm and fortitude from the episodes of the Auliya. This in turn engenders in us the desire to give practical expression to the Sunnah of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

Just as there is a standard of extreme austerity in the Ahaadith for the Auliya, there is also a moderate standard of *Zuhd* (worldly renunciation) for the rank and file of the Ummah. While the Auliya would refuse to accept even halaal gifts, we are supposed to refuse acceptance of haraam and mushtabah. While the Auliya spend the entire night or the greater part of the night in ibaadat, we are expected to at least perform just a few raka'ts of Nafl during the night. While the Auliya fasted throughout the year, we are expected to adhere to at least the Masnoon days of Fasting. While the Auliya donned coarse and patched garments, we are expected to at least don simple Islamic garments and abstain from the

fashions of the kuffaar, and from wearing raiment's of pride and show.

We are on this earthly sojourn for an extremely short period of time. Hence Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: *"Stay in this world as if you are a traveller or one who crosses a road."* Hadhrat Ibn Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) narrates that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: *"When you are in the evening, do not wait for the morning, and when you are in the morning, do not wait for the evening."* No one knows if he will see the evening or the next morning. We vacillate in a realm of uncertainty, between fear and hope. Therefore, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that the most intelligent person is he who makes preparation for the life beyond Maut.

MUJLISUL ULAMA OF S.A.

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THE LOVE FOR ANONYMITY

It is reported in the Hadith that on the Day of Qiyaamah, Hadhrat Uwais Qarni (rahmatullah alayh) will be admitted into Jannat in great pomp and splendour. He will be in the midst of seventy thousand Malaaikah (Angels) who will all be identical to him in resemblance. No one except those whom Allah Ta'ala wishes, will be able to recognize who Uwais Qarni is. Just as Hadhrat Uwais (rahmatullah alayh) passed his life on earth incognito, so too will his wish that he remains incognito even in the Aakhirah be fulfilled.

TRUST IN ALLAH

Once three days and three nights of starvation, hunger and thirst, drove Hadhrat Uwais Qarni (rahmatullah alayh) to the mountain side where he began eating some leaves. Suddenly he saw a mound of gold coins near to him. He ignored the gold. Soon thereafter he saw a goat with a loaf of warm bread in its mouth. Again he paid no heed to the goat with the bread. Then the goat spoke and exclaimed: "O Uwais! This is your rizq sent by the True Razzaaq (Provider). Hadhrat Uwais then took the bread and expressed his shukr to Allah Ta'ala.

THE PRICE OF DIVINE LOVE

A pious man came to Hadhrat Hasan Basri (rahmatullah alayh) and lamented: "My two year old daughter cries incessantly and profusely night and day. All my efforts to placate her and all medicinal remedies have been of no avail. I fear that she might lose her vision. You are an accepted bandah of Allah. Please accompany me to view

her condition. Perhaps by virtue of your supplication, Allah Ta'ala will cure my daughter.”

When they arrived at the girl's home, Hadhrat Hasan (rahmatullah alayh) said to her:

“What is afflicting you? What has overwhelmed your heart so much that night and day you wail and cause distress and grief to your parents.” The little girl responded: “O Shaikh! Divine Love has overwhelmed my heart. I have tasted the pleasure of this crying. If perception of the Divine Vision is attainable by means of sacrificing my vision, then too, it will be a treasure acquired gratis. If ten thousand eyes have to be sacrificed for perceiving the Divine Vision, it is acceptable.”

DIVINE FEAR

Once someone asked Hadhrat Hasan Basri: “Why are you perpetually overwhelmed with grief? You never smile. You constantly cry.” Hadhrat Hasan replied: “I fear Allah Rabbul Izzat. He is the King of Jahannum. I am plagued by the fear that shaitaan and my nafs may trap me in deception, leading to my admission into Allah's punishment.”

THREE ADVICES

Hadhrat Hasan Basri (rahmatullah alayh) offered his associates the following three advices:

- “O People! If you desire some insight of your condition after death, then reflect on the state of those who have died before you. The vice or virtue with which people remember them, will also be your condition.

- O People! He who regards people to be his followers and believes himself to be a leader of the community, has lost his intelligence. He will be labelled an ignoramus.
- O People! At the time of death, man will depart with three regrets: (1) Unaccomplished hopes regarding accumulation of wealth. (2) Unfulfilled dreams and desires. (3) Preparations for the life beyond the grave had not been made.”

This will be the lamentable state of those who regard this worldly life as the purpose of creation. They remain forgetful and indifferent of the true goal of life – the Aakhirah.

VAIN HOPE

Someone asked Hadhrat Basri (rahmatullah alayh) about a man who is engrossed in vice and transgression, yet he hopes that Allah Ta’ala will grant him salvation. Hadhrat Hasan said: “His hope is vain. His baseless hope will not be fulfilled.” Hadhrat Hasan then recited the following aayat of the Qur’aan to substantiate what he had said: *“What, is a man who stands up (in Salaat) during the moments of the night, prostrating fearing the Aakhirah and hoping for the mercy of his Rabb, equal to a disobedient one?”*

Minus effort and struggle, hopes for Allah’s mercy and for salvation are vain.

GOLD AND SILVER

Hadhrat Maalik Bin Dinaar (rahmatullah alayh) said that in the Taurah it is recorded that a lover of gold and silver finds it difficult to proclaim the Haqq (Truth). Ziyaad

Bin Alaa' (rahmatullah alayh) once saw in a dream the earth exquisitely adorned with every type of conceivable embellishment. Observing this dazzling earthly beauty, he said: 'May Allah save us from you.' The earth responded: 'If you desire safety from my snares, then have an abhorrence for gold and silver just as they had an abhorrence for your father, Aadam (alayhis salaam)."

AN EVIL DEATH

Once Hadhrat Maalik Bin Dinaar (rahmatullah alayh) went to visit a sick man. On reaching the place, he realized that the man was in his death throes. Each time Hadhrat Maalik attempted to instruct him in the recitation of the Kalimah, the man would say: 'Ten, eleven'. Then the dying man said: 'O Maalik Bin Dinaar! There is a mountain of fire in front of me. When I make an attempt to recite the Kalimah, the mountain of fire moves towards me threatening to engulf me.'" When Hadhrat Maalik questioned his relatives, they said that this man was a devourer of interest, and he would give short measure and weight.

MAALIK BIN DINAAR'S FEAR

Once when Hadhrat Maalik Bin Dinaar (rahmatullah alayh) saw some people burying a mayyit, he was so overwhelmed with fear that he fell down unconscious. People carried him to his house. After he had regained conscious he lamented: "Would that I was never born so that I would have been saved from the calamities of this world and the Hereafter." That same evening, he heard a voice exclaiming: "By Our grace and mercy We have forgiven Maalik Bin Dinaar." That very moment Maalik

Bin Dinaar set his slave free. He raised his Shahaadat finger (the forefinger), recited the Kalimah, and his soul departed from this ephemeral abode.

THE REWARD OF MAALIK BIN DINAAR

A buzrug saw the following dream: Jannat in all its splendour and beauty was shown to him. Near to a tree glittering with *Noor* was a throne of red *ya'qoot* (a heavenly precious stone). A young man in a state of indescribable resplendence was seated on the throne. A thousand Angels were in attendance. The astonished buzrug asked: 'What is this assembly and who is the young man on the throne, whose face dazzles like the sun?' The response came: 'The young man is Maalik Bin Dinaar who had devoted himself on earth to the obedience of his Maalik (King – Allah Ta'ala). The Angels are conveying to him glad tidings from Allah Ta'ala.'

HABEEB AJMI SACRIFICES HIS DESIRE

Hadhrat Habeeb Ajmi (rahmatullah alayh) had totally abstained from consuming meat for seven years. This was a penance which he imposed on himself in the process of attaining self-reformation. After seven years, the desire to eat meat was overwhelming. He went to the bazaar and purchased some cooked meat and bread. On his way back he saw a poor lad. He promptly gave the meat and the bread to the lad. He had sacrificed his intense desire for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala.

RAABIAH'S ABSORPTION IN DIVINE LOVE

Once someone asked Hadhrat Raabiah (rahmatullah alayh): “Do you have animosity for shaitaan?” She replied: ‘My friendship with Rahmaan (Allah Ta’ala) does not permit any time for entertaining animosity for shaitaan.’

AN ATTITUDE OF LOVE FOR THE WORLD

A buzrug from Basrah once visited Hadhrat Raabiah Basriyyah (rahmatullah alayh). In her presence he was vehemently criticizing the world. She said: ‘It appears that you have great love for the world. If you truly had no love for the world, you would not have engrossed yourself so much with the accursed world. When one loves something one speaks much of it.’

RAABIAH ON HER WAY TO HAJJ

Raabiah Basriyyah (rahmatullah alayha) resolved to proceed for Hajj. Seated on her mule she joined a caravan of prospective hujjaaj. Along the journey her mule died. Her travelling companions consoling her told her not to be despondent. They offered to take her along. Despite their offering of assistance, Raabiah refused and urged them to proceed. She said that Allah is her protector and that they should leave her where she is. After failing to persuade her, the caravan departed without her, leaving her alone in the desolate wilderness. When the caravan had departed, Hadhrat Raabiah shedding tears in profusion, petitioned Allah Ta’ala: “O My Maalik! You have invited this insignificant slave-woman to visit Your House. My mule has died. Now I am stranded in this wilderness. How can I call on anyone

else while You are present here? Who should I appeal to when You hear the cries of every caller? You have said (in the Qur'aan): 'I respond to the call of the one who calls Me.' O Allah! You are not far away. You have said (in the Qur'aan): 'We are nearer to man than his jugular vein.' It is ignorance to call on anyone when You are present. O Allah! You are aware of my distressful state."

Even before Hadhrat Raabiah terminated her supplication, Allah Ta'ala with His Perfect Qudrat resurrected the mule. Raabiah fell down in Sajdah expressing her gratitude (shukr) to Allah Ta'ala. She mounted her mule and within a short while linked up with the caravan. The astonishment of the travellers knew no bounds. This episode increased their yaqeen (faith and conviction) in the power of Allah Ta'ala.

Episodes of this nature display the special and lofty relationship which the select Auliya enjoy with Allah Ta'ala.

RAABIAH'S NOCTURNAL OCCUPATION

Hadhrat Raabiah's permanent practice was to spend the entire night in ibaadat. Every night she performed several hundred raka'ts Salaat. After Fajr Salaat, she would sit on her musalla (prayer mat), and engage in Thikrullaah. Should her eyes become overwhelmed with sleep, she would jump up and address her nafs: "How long will you dwell in the sleep of indifference (ghaflat)? O Nafs! Do you not know that Maut is hovering over you?"

THE VALUE OF THIKRULLAAH

Hadhrat Raabiah (rahmatullah alayh) wore a dress made from a blanket. This was her permanent garb. She

instructed the people to bury her with this dress when she dies. Accordingly her *wasiyyat* was carried out. Raabiah was buried with her simple dress serving as her kafan. After a few days a lady in her dream saw Raabiah dressed most resplendently. She was wearing a beautiful green silken dress. The lady asked about the blanket-dress. Raabiah replied that Allah Ta'ala had given her this beautiful green garment in exchange for her old blanket-dress. The lady said: "Inform me of an act by means of which I could gain Allah's proximity." Raabiah said: "For gaining Divine Proximity, there is nothing more efficacious than Thikrullaah. The Qur'an says: '*And the Thikr of Allah is the greatest.*' "

RAABIAH ON HER DEATHBED

When Hadhrat Raabiah (rahmatullah alayh) was in her last moments of this earthly sojourn, Hadhrat Maalik Bin Dinaar (rahmatullah alayh) came to visit her. He asked: "Here on earth what had distressed you the most?" She said: "Sin." He said: "Do you desire anything?" She said: "Yes. I desire *Maghfirat* (Forgiveness)."

ABSTENTION FROM MUSHTABAH

When Hadhrat Raabiah (rahmatullah alayh) was on her deathbed, Hadhrat Maalik Bin Dinaar (rahmatullah alayh) asked her: "Do you desire anything of the world?" Raabiah: "For thirty years I had desired to eat fresh dates, but this desire remained unfulfilled." Maalik Bin Dinaar thought: "She appears to be a guest for a few more moments. How could I procure fresh dates so quickly?" As he was reflecting, suddenly there appeared a bird with a fresh date in its mouth. The bird deposited the date near

to Maalik Bin Dinaar. He hastened with the date to Raabiah. She said: “From whence did this date come?” Maalik Bin Dinaar narrated the episode. Raabiah said: “It is improper to consume the date. I do not know from whose orchard the bird plucked the date. I shall now consume dates after I reach My Master (Allah Ta’ala).”

RAABIAH’S SOUL TAKES FLIGHT

Immediately after the episode narrated above, Hadhrat Raabiah (rahmatullah alayh) said to Maalik Bin Dinaar: “Now leave me alone in the house with my Maalik.” She asked all those who were present, to leave. With much grief, everyone went outside. The door of the house closed, and the door of Allah’s Mercy opened. Soon, the people who were waiting outside heard a voice from the house reciting:

“O Thou Soul at rest! Return to your Rabb, well-pleased (with Him), and (He) well-pleased (with you).”

The people immediately entered the house and discovered that Raabiah’s Rooh had departed from this transitory abode and took flight to the Mercy of her Beloved.

Despite a thirty-year craving for dates, she restrained her desire in obedience to Rasulullah’s command of abstention from *mushtabah* (doubtful things). The miraculous episode of the bird did not deflect her from strict observance of the Shariah.

FUDHAIL’S NASEEHAT TO KHALIFAH HAARUN RASHID

Administering some admonition (naseehat) to Khalifah Haarun Rashid, Hadhrat Fudhail Bin Iyaadh (rahmatullah

alayh) said: “O Haarun Rashid, fear Allah! Be prepared for His interrogation. Understand well that tomorrow on the Day of Qiyaamah, your Creator will demand a reckoning from you on behalf of every single one of His creation (who was under your jurisdiction). He will claim justice from you on their behalf. If an old lady in her hovel had slept hungry, she will cling on you and demand justice in front of Allah. Allah will be her supporter.”

Overcome with fear and emotion, the Khalifah fell down unconscious.

THOSE WHO FEAR ALLAH

People asked Hadhrat Fudhail Bin Iyaadh (rahmatullah alayh): “Why do we not see anywhere men who fear Allah?” Hadhrat Fudhail said: “Since you, yourselves do not fear Allah, those who fear Him are not visible to you. If you fear Allah, you will observe those who fear Him.”

WISE COUNSEL OF FUDHAIL

Addressing the people, Hadhrat Fudhail Bin Iyaadh (rahmatullah alayh) said:

- * Everything fears a man who fears Allah. He who does not fear Allah, fears all things.
- * Entry into the world is easy, but to depart with innocence is most difficult.
- * Fear (of Allah) is proportionate to Knowledge (of the Deen). Taqwa is proportionate to love for the Aakhirah.
- * Allah’s *La’nat* (curse) settles on a man who professes love for his brother Muslim while harbouring malice for him. There is the danger of such a man becoming blind and deaf.

* A man of *Ma'rifat* and *Zuhd* is one who is pleased with the *Taqdeer* of Allah. (*Ma'rifat* is a lofty state of divine perception. *Zuhd* is abstinence from the world, the minimum degree being expulsion of worldly love from the heart.)

* Allah has accumulated all evil in one place, and has decreed the world as its key.

DEPRIVED FROM DIVINE PROXIMITY

Hadhrat Fudhail Bin Iyaadh (rahmatullah alayh) said: "The closer an Aalim of the Deen is to the ruler (king or government), the further is he from Allah's Proximity.

OCCASIONS OF SERENITY

Hadhrat Ibn Adham who at one time was the proud king of Balkh (which today is in Afghanistan), had abdicated his throne, abandoned his kingdom and devoted his life seeking the Pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. Once someone asked him: "After you had abandoned the kingdom of Balkh, did you experience any times of happiness?" Hadhrat Ibraahim Adham (rahmatullah alayh) said: "I experienced happiness on three occasions:

(i) Once I was seated in a ferryboat crossing a river. My clothes were tattered and torn. My long hair was shabby and dishevelled. The passengers in the boat mocked and made fun of me. A jester from among them would repeatedly tug at my hair and slap me. At that time I derived much happiness on account of the humiliation suffered by my ego (nafs).

(ii) Suddenly a storm began to rage and the boat was tossing furiously. A passenger (who was a heathen) said that the storm will not abate as long as a man is not

sacrificed and thrown into the river. All eyes turned towards me. At that moment an atmosphere of serenity settled over me. As preparations were being made to cast me overboard, the storm abated and the water became placid.

(iii) One day, overwhelmed with fatigue I went into a Musjid to gain some rest. Some people grabbed me by my hands, and ordered me to leave the Musjid. Being overwhelmed with fatigue and weakness I lacked the energy to get up and walk out of the Musjid. They grabbed my feet, dragged me to the door and vehemently pushed me down the stairs leading out of the Musjid. I began rolling from the steps towards the ground. Blood gushed from the injuries on my head as it hit each step. Words cannot describe the happiness and calm which I experienced at this humiliation and pain inflicted on my nafs. On every step on my downward sojourn, Allah Ta'ala by His grace and mercy bestowed to me a different spiritual realm of *Wilaayat* (Sainthood). The serenity and pleasure I experienced ended abruptly when my descent came to a halt at the bottom of the stairs. I lamented much, and yearned that the downward sojourn had continued into eternity, for in reality it was not a descent. It was an ascent into the loftiest stages of spiritual elevation.

BOYCOTT

The people complained to Hadhrat Ibraahim Bin Adham (rahmatullah alayh) about the exorbitant prices being charged for meat. He advised: "Abstain from buying meat. The prices will tumble."

A DIVINE OFFICIAL

Someone derisively asked Hadhrat Ibraahim Bin Adham (rahmatullah alayh): “What is your profession for earning a livelihood? From whence do you obtain your food?” Hadhrat Ibraahim answered: “I eat from the rizq provided by Allah. I am one of those divine officials who have no need for a profession.”

IBRAAHIM ADHAM’S FOUR MOUNTS

Someone asked Hadhrat Ibraahim Bin Adham: “How do you spend your time?” Hadhrat Adham replied: “I have four mounts. I constantly mount and dismount along the journey. When Allah Ta’ala bestows a *ni’mat*, I mount my horse of *Shukr* (gratitude) and journey into the Divine Presence. When I render an act of virtue, I mount my horse of *Ikhlāas* (sincerity) and proceed into the Divine Presence. When a calamity befalls me, I mount my horse of *Sabr* (patience), and ride into the Divine Presence. When I commit a sin, I mount my horse of *Istighfaar* and *Taubah* (Repentance) and present myself in the Divine Presence.”

THE QABRUSTAAN IS THE CITY

Hadhrat Ibraahim Bin Adham (rahmatullah alayh) was walking in a wilderness near to a city. A soldier on horseback approached and asked the direction of the city. Hadhrat Ibraahim pointed in the direction of a qabrustaani (graveyard). Visibly annoyed, the soldier, shouted: ‘Despite being a mendicant, you are mocking me!’ Hadhrat Ibraahim again pointed towards the qabrustaani. The soldier erupting with rage, severely beat Hadhrat

Ibraahim with his whip drawing blood in profusion. He then went towards the city.

As he approached the city, the soldier saw crowds of people heading towards the wilderness. When he made enquiries, a man said: “We have been informed that the former king of Balkh who has become a *Kaamil Durwaish* (a perfect saint) has arrived in this wilderness and is camping near to the qabrustaan. We are off to welcome him.”

Hearing this, the soldier lamented and cursed himself. Fear overcame him. He went with the crowds. When they reached near to the qabrustaan, they saw Hadhrat Ibraahim Bin Adham (rahmatullah alayh) serenely sitting by a stream washing his blood-stained garments. When he saw the crowd, he pointed in the direction of the qabrustaan, saying: “A place which increases is a city.”

WHY DUAS ARE NOT ACCEPTED.

One day people surrounded Hadhrat Ibraahim Bin Adham (rahmatullah alayh). They said: “We have a very difficult problem which has made us despondent. Allah Ta’ala says in the Qur’aan Majeed: *‘Call unto Me, I shall answer you.’* We make dua for years, but it remains unaccepted. What is the reason?” Hadhrat Ibraahim said: “Not one, but there are many reasons for this.

- * You have recognized your true Creator, but you have not fulfilled the rights of His ibaadat.
- * You recite the Book of Allah, but you do not act in accordance with its commands.
- * You claim to love Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), but you do not follow his Sunnah.

- * You have acknowledged shaitaan to be your enemy, but you always submit to his orders.
 - * You consider yourself to be an inmate of Jannat, but you make no effort to gain it.
 - * You believe Maut to be the truth, but you do not make preparations for it
 - * You consider yourself freed from Jahannum but you do nothing to save yourself from it.
 - * You utilize the bounties of Allah night and day, but you do not express gratitude (shukr).
 - * You frequently bury your dead, but you derive no lesson.
- Therefore, there is no wonder when duas go unanswered.”

IN SEARCH OF HALAAL RIZQ

In his search for halaal rizq, Hadhrat Ibraahim Bin Adham (rahmatullah alayh) went to the City of Tartus. The owner of an orchard hired him to take care of the orchard. One day the master instructed Hadhrat Ibraahim to bring a sweet pomegranate. Hadhrat Ibraahim plucked a rosy pomegranate and presented it to his master. When the master tasted the fruit, it was sour. With annoyance, the master said: “Did I request a sour pomegranate or a sweet one?” Hadhrat Ibraahim brought a redder pomegranate. But this one too was sour. The master angrily retorted: “After working so long you are unable to distinguish between sour and sweet pomegranates!” Hadhrat Ibraahim with utmost humility said: “I was hired to take care of the orchard, not to taste the fruit.”

The master said: “Such honesty is practised by only Ibraahim Bin Adham. Are you Ibraahim?” That very

moment Hadhrat Ibraahim Bin Adham handed back the key of the orchard to the owner and left. The owner realizing who his worker was, apologized profusely and begged Hadhrat Ibraahim to remain with him. Ibraahim, declined the offer. Now that his identity was known, the former employer-employee relationship would not exist, and this was intolerable for him.

IBRAAHIM BIN ADHAM OBSERVES THE QUDRAT OF ALLAH

Hadhrat Ibraahim Bin Adham (rahmatullah alayh) narrated the following episode to Hadhrat Ibraahim Bin Thu'baan (rahmatullah alayh):

“Once I was stranded in the wilderness for twelve days and twelve nights. I found not a morsel of food nor a drop of water during this period. I was not unduly perturbed. However, it surprised me to discover that despite being without food and water for 12 days, my health and strength were not affected in the least. This was amazing. After all, this worldly life is dependent on material ways and means.

While these thoughts crossed my mind, I heard someone calling from nearby. When I went near to the spot from whence the voice came, I was astonished to see a buzrug. Both his legs were amputated. Seeing me, he exclaimed: ‘O Ibraahim! Do you doubt the perfect Qudrat (Power) of Allah, Rabbul Izzat? I have neither ate nor drunk anything for 16 days. By His grace and kindness Allah has sustained my health and strength. Look! If I instruct this tree to become gold, then I have confidence that Allah Ta’ala will transform it into gold.’

When I looked at the tree, it had become pure gold”, said Ibraahim (rahmatullah alayh).

THE EVIL OF GHEEBAT

Once a pious man who exercised much caution regarding halaal food invited some people for meals. Hadhrat Ibraahim Bin Adham had also been invited. When he reached the house of the host, there was a delay in serving the food. The host was waiting for one more guest to arrive. Someone commented adversely about the absent person. Ibraahim Bin Adham silently left the gathering. He said to himself: ‘Gheebat is taking place here.’. He severely criticized and reprimanded himself for having attended. He profoundly regretted that he had to listen to gheebat being made of a Muslim. He repented and resolved never to accept such invitations again.

ALLAH IS SUFFICIENT

In the city of Khurasaan, a relative of Hadhrat Ibn Adham (rahmatullah alayh) had died. Besides Ibraahim, this relative who had left behind a substantial estate, had no other heir. It occurred to Hadhrat Ibraahim to go to Khurasaan to distribute the wealth to the poor. He feared that the wealth would be misappropriated and squandered. With this intention he set off with a group of his companions in the direction of Khurasaan. Along the journey, they saw on the banks of a river a blind animal sitting calmly. A frog emerged from the stream with a worm in its mouth. It fed the worm to the blind animal.

Hadhrat Ibraahim remained standing there for a long while, deep in reflection. He said to his companions: “Have you observed the wonder of my Rabb? Just see

how he delivers the rizq of this blind animal.” He cancelled his intention of going to Khurasaan. Allah Ta’ala will arrange for the distribution of the wealth.

As a penance for his error of having planned to go to Khurasaan, Hadhrat Ibraahim remained alone in the wilderness, not eating or drinking for three days. After three days, he saw a well. He lowered the bucket. When he retrieved the bucket, it was filled with dirhams (silver coins). He cast the bucket with the coins back into the well. When he retrieved the bucket the second time, it was filled with dinars (gold coins).

He emptied the bucket in the well and lowered it for the third time. When he retrieved the bucket, it was filled with diamonds. In frustration, he supplicated: ‘O Allah! I want water for wudhu. I am not interested in gold and diamonds. After lowering the bucket for the fourth time, he obtained water. Allah Ta’ala says: *“Whoever has tawakkul (trust) on Allah, He suffices for that person.”* Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: *“He who has true tawakkul on Allah, Allah will feed him as he feeds the birds. They set out hungry from their nests in the morning, and return in the evening with full stomachs.”*

THE LOFTIEST STATION – BAABUSH SHAMS

After Hadhrat Ibraahim Bin Adham’s demise, a Buzrug saw him in a dream, and enquired about his condition. In the dream, Hadhrat Ibraahim Bin Adham (rahmatullah alayh) explained: “Allah, Rahmaan, Raheem, Ghafoor, Rabbul Izzat purely by His boundless grace and mercy bestowed to me indescribable bounties. Allah Ta’ala

admitted this contemptible slave into the proximity of the Abode known as Baabush Shams.”. The Buzrug asked: “Which place is Baabush Shams?” Hadhrat Ibraahim said: “It is a wonderful Abode under the Lofty Arsh of Allah Ta’ala. The greatest treasure which the inmates of this Abode have acquired is the daily Vision of Allah Azza Wa Jal. There is no greater bounty than this treasure.”

ADMONITION AND ADVICE OF BISHR HAAFI

Hadhrat Bishr Haafi (rahmatullah alayh) said:

- * The desire to be praised by people is the effect of love for the world.
- * Three things are extremely difficult: (i) Generosity during poverty. (ii) Piety in privacy. (iii) Proclaiming the truth at the time of fear.
- * He who wishes to taste freedom should purify his heart.
- * When the devotees of the world refuse to abandon the dunya, then you abandon them otherwise you may be resurrected together with them.
- * Man will not acquire moral excellence as long as his enemy has no fear of any harm from him.
- * If a man is unable to remember Allah much, at least he should not indulge much in sin.
- * A Sufi is one whose heart is pure and attached to Allah Ta’ala.
- * Looking at the face of a miser hardens the heart.
- * The devotees of the world are deprived of the sweetness of the Aakhirah.

A HYPOCRITE LEARNS HIS LESSON

It was the practice of Hadhrat Bishr Haafi (rahmatullah alayh) on Fridays to distribute food to the poor and to those who had renounced the world and were living in seclusion. One Friday while he was buying some delicious food in the bazaar, a man who used to outwardly display devotion to Hadhrat Bishr Haafi, thought to himself: ‘What kind of saint are you? You pretend to be a Wali of Allah, but you indulge in the pleasures of the world. You discourage others from worldly pleasures while you gratify your nafs in this manner. Today I shall discover your misdeeds and expose you.’

Hadhrat Bishr, taking the food, went in the direction leading to the outskirts of Damascus. The hypocrite followed at a discreet distance. After leaving the Gate of Damascus, he walked a short distance and came to a Musjid in the wilderness. The hypocrite meanwhile was still following. Hadhrat Bishr entered the Musjid. The hypocrite saw an aged Buzrug extremely frail and weak engaging in Thikrullaah. It was clear that the Buzrug had not eaten for a few days. Hadhrat Bishr presented the food to him.

Seeing this, the hypocrite was smitten with remorse. He regretted his unfounded suspicion. He said to himself: ‘Alas! I entertained an evil suspicion regarding such a Man of Allah. I have committed a grievous sin.’ He resolved to seek forgiveness for his crime when Hadhrat Bishr would emerge from the Musjid. While Hadhrat Bishr was in discourse with the Buzrug, the man fell asleep.

After sometime Hadhrat Bishr came out and departed. When the man's eyes opened, he searched all over the show, but there was no sign of Hadhrat Bishr. After failing to find Hadhrat Bishr, he decided to return to the city. But, strangely, he was unable to find the way into Damascus. There was no sign of the city nor of the Gate from which he had come into this wilderness. Perplexed, remorseful and fearful, he entered the Musjid and asked the Buzrug: "Where am I? Where is Bishr Haafi? Where is the gate of the City of Damascus?" The Buzrug replied: "O hypocrite! Are you intoxicated or mad? You are in the desert of Baghdad, but you ask about Damascus? You cannot reach your home now. Taste the consequences of evil suspicion." The man started to lament and wail. He now realized what had happened.

Hadhrat Bishr had miraculously arrived in the wilderness of Baghdad within moments of leaving the precincts of Damascus. Lost in the wilderness, hundreds of miles from Damascus, the man thinking of his family and his fate, shed tears in profusion. To allay his grief, the aged Buzrug advised him to stay in the Musjid for eight days. Hadhrat Bishr Haafi would again come the following Friday. The Buzrug promised to intercede on behalf of the unfortunate man.

On the next Friday, Hadhrat Bishr arrived in the same way with food. After eating, the Buzrug and Bishr engaged in Thikrullaah. Thereafter, the Buzrug explained the predicament of the man and pleaded for him to be forgiven. Hadhrat Bishr took hold of the man's hand and led him out of the Musjid and ordered him to follow in his footsteps. They walked only a few steps, and

suddenly the man saw that they had reached the precincts of Damascus. Overjoyed, the man apologized much for his unfounded suspicion.

THREE CATEGORIES OF FUQARA

Explaining the classes of Fuqara, Hadhrat Bishr Haafi (rahmatullah alayh) said: “There are three classes of Fuqara:

- 1) The first class of Fuqara neither ask for anything nor do they accept from anyone anything if given. They are such Fuqara who will reside in Illiyyeen with the class of Souls called Roohaa-niyyeen.
- 2) The second class of Fuqara do not ask anyone for anything. However, if something is given to them, they accept it. They will reside with the Muqarribeen in Jannatul Firdaus.
- 3) This third class of Fuqara do not unnecessarily ask. When in need, they ask. They will be among the Ashaab-e-Yameen (Those of the Right Hand).

DUA IN GRIEF

A man overwhelmed with worries came to Hadhrat Bishr Haafi (rahmatullah alayh) and lamented: “Hadhrat, I am poverty-stricken. I have a large family. I cannot even buy food for them. Do make dua that Allah removes this hardship from me.” Hadhrat Bishr (rahmatullah alayh) said: “When your wife and children have no food and they cry in their hardship and grief, then precisely at that time make dua for me, for your dua at that time is superior than my dua.”

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: “Verily, Allah is with every grieving heart.”

THE EFFECT OF BISHR'S NASEEHAT

Hadhrat Bishr Haafi (rahmatullah alayh) one day saw a crowd of people. When he approached, he saw a burly man holding a woman hostage. He had a large knife at her neck. No one dared go near him. No one could do anything to release the woman from his clutches. Hadhrat Bishr went close to the man and whispered something to him. The man immediately fell unconscious perspiring much. The grateful woman left the scene, and so did Hadhrat Bishr Haafi.

After some time when the man regained conscious, the people asked him for an explanation. He said: "I can only remember a man saying to me: "Allah is watching everything you are doing." This statement instilled such overwhelming fear in me that I fainted."

The people told him that the person was Hadhrat Bishr Haafi (rahmatullah alayh). So much remorse and grief overtook him that he became severely ill. Within one week he passed away.

SERVICE TO THE POOR IS SUPERIOR TO 100 HAJJ

A man came to Hadhrat Bishr Haafi (rahmatullah alayh) and said that he had saved 2,000 dinars. He wished to go for Hajj. Hadhrat Bishr said: "O man! Do you wish to go for Hajj on a holiday or do you wish to gain the pleasure of Allah?" The man said: "In fact, my intention for Hajj is to gain Allah's pleasure." Hadhrat Bishr said: "Go and settle the debts of ten Faqeers or distribute this wealth to ten orphans or aid a man in need, who has a large family

to support. Assistance rendered to Muslims in hardship is superior to a hundred Nafl Hajj.”

The man said: “Hadhrat! At this time the yearning for Hajj is overwhelming.” Hadhrat Bishr said: “Now it is conspicuous that the wealth in your possession was not acquired in lawful ways. As long as you do not squander that wealth in inappropriate (i.e. prohibited) ways, you will not be contented.”

(This episode is a salubrious lesson for all those who have made Hajj and Umrah the external façade for concealing their frequent tours of extravagance and nafsaniyat. If their intention for undertaking Nafl Hajj or Umrah is sincere – the Pleasure of Allah – they will certainly implement the naseehat of Hadhrat Bishr Haafi – rahmatullah alayh).

THE BARE-FOOTED BISHR

Haafi means a bare-footed man. This became the title of Hadhrat Bishr because he was perpetually bare-footed. Once someone asked him the reason for walking without shoes. He said: “Allah Ta’ala says in Surah Nooh: ‘We have made the earth a bedding for you.’ How can I trample on this divinely-bestowed bedding with shoes?” This was the emotional state (*haal*) of Hadhrat Bishr’s spiritual perception of Allah Ta’ala and His bounties. The Auliya have their own individual states of divine perception. They are all beautiful flowers of Serenity from the same Garden.

THE KARAAMAT OF BISHR HAAFI

The *roohaani* (spiritual) exuberance exuded by Hadhrat Bishr Haafi (rahmatullah alayh) pervaded even the birds

and the animals. It is narrated that after he had resolved to walk barefoot, the birds and animals no longer soiled the streets where he walked. One day a person saw some animal droppings in an alleyway. The thought of Hadhrat Bishr's possible demise crossed his mind. When he made enquiries he learnt that precisely at the time when he saw the impurity, Hadhrat Bishr (rahmatullah alayh) had died.

HADHRAT BISHR AFTER HIS MAUT

After his demise someone saw in a dream that Hadhrat Bishr Haafi (rahmatullah alayh) was seated on a beautiful green horse together with Hadhrat Ma'roof Karkhi (rahmatullah alayh). They were flying on the horse in the air in an atmosphere of superb serenity.

GOOD CHARACTER

Hadhrat Sufyaan Thauri (rahmatullah alayh) said: "A man's good character extinguishes the Wrath of Allah. Giving Sadqah with haraam wealth is like washing garments with blood."

THE STATUS OF PIETY

After Hadhrat Sufyaan Thauri's death, someone saw him in a dream, and asked: "How did you find the fear and loneliness of the grave?" Hadhrat Sufyaan Thauri said: "Allah Ta'ala had made my grave like a lush garden of Jannat. Another person in a dream saw the Rooh (Soul) of Hadhrat Sufyaan Thauri fluttering from one tree to another in Jannat. He asked: 'Hadhrat, why was this lofty rank bestowed to you?' Hadhrat Sufyaan replied: "On account of piety".

THE QABR

Hadhrat Sufyaan Thauri (rahmatullah alayh) said: “He who always remembers the Qabr will find it to be from among the gardens of Jannat, and he who forgets the Qabr will find it to be from one of the pits of Jahannum.

A SHOW-OFF AND A THIEF

Hadhrat Sufyaan Thauri (rahmatullah alayh) said: “A durwaish (saint) who frequents wealthy persons is a man of *riya* (show), and a durwaish who associates with the rulers is a thief.”

RIDHA' OF ALLAH

Hadhrat Shaqeeq Balkhi (rahmatullah alayh) said: “I obtained the attribute of *Ridha'* of Allah (i.e. to be pleased with Allah Ta'ala at all times, whether in adversity or prosperity, health or sickness; happiness of grief, safety or fear) in four things:

- To be unconcerned about sustenance (rizq)
- Ikhlāas (sincerity) in everything
- To regard Shaitaan and the desires of the nafs as enemies
- To accumulate provisions for the Akhirah.”

THE LOST PROPERTY OF THE MU'MIN

“Al-Hikmah (spiritual wisdom) is the lost property of the Mu'min. Therefore, search for it even if it is in a kaafir.”
(Hadith)

Once a non-believer said to Hadhrat Shaqeeq Balkhi (rahmatullah alayh): “Your claim to be worshipping the Almighty and that you have trust in Him. O Shaqeeq! It is obvious that you are not worshipping the Almighty.

On the contrary, you are worshipping provisions (sustenance – rizq – of life).” Hadhrat Shaqeeq (rahmatullah alayh) instructed his mureeds: “This is a wonderful naseehat (advice of wisdom). Write it down.”

When the non-believer heard this, he said to himself: “Undoubtedly, Shaqeeq is a great saint. He is a devotee of the truth.” Then he said: “O Shaqeeq! Truly, your Deen is the Truth. There is humility and the highest degree of love for truth in your Deen. Recording a statement from an irreligious person like myself, and considering it to a lesson for your people, is ample testimony for this. Quickly convert me to Islam.” The non-believer thus embraced Islam at the hands of Hadhrat Shaqee (rahmatullah alayh).

Hadhrat Shaqeeq (rahmatullah alayh) commented: “Ilm teaches that if a genuine pearl is found in a drain, it should be retrieved, washed and treasured.”

A WISEMAN, A WEALTHY MAN, AN INTELLIGENT MAN, A SAINT AND A MISER

Hadhrat Shaqeeq Balkhi (rahmatullah alayh) said: “I asked more than a hundred Ulama: ‘Who is a wiseman, a wealthy man, a saint and a miser?’” All of them had responded similarly. A wiseman is he who does not befriend the world. A wealthy man is he who is contented with predestined fate. An intelligent man is he who is not deceived by the world. A saint is he who does not search for more. A miser is he who honours wealth more than human beings.

THREE BOUNTIES AND THREE CALAMITIES

Hadhrat Shaqeeq Balkhi (rahmatullah alayh) said: “There are three bounties in poverty: An unencumbered heart (a heart which is not burdened by worry); Peace and serenity; a light reckoning (in the Aakhirah). On the contrary, there are three calamities of wealth: a heart overwhelmed with worries of the world; lack of peace and tranquillity; a difficult reckoning (in the Aakhirah).”

THE VALUE OF THE GUEST

Hadhrat Shaqeeq Balkhi (rahmatullah alayh) said: “Of all things, I love most a guest. Only Allah Ta’ala knows the reward for hospitality shown to the guest.”

THE BARKAT OF HIS BODY

Hadhrat Imaam Shaafi’ (rahmatullah alayh) sent his messenger to Hadhrat Imaam Ahmad Bin Hambal (rahmatullah alayh) with the message: *“You will soon be overtaken by a momentous calamity, but you will emerge safely from it.”* Imaam Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh) was delighted by the arrival of Imaam Shaafi’s messenger. As an expression of his joy, he removed the kurtah he was at that time wearing, and sent it as a gift for Imaam Shaafi’ (rahmatullah alayh).

When the messenger handed the kurtah to Imaam Shaafi’, he asked: “Was this kurtah on the body of Imaam Ahmad?” Messenger: “Yes.” Imaam Shaafi’: “Did he wear any other garment under the kurtah (e.g. a vest)?” Messenger: “No, the kurtah was directly against his body.”

Imaam Shaafi' (rahmatullah alayh) placed the garment reverentially in a dish and poured water on it. After soaking the garment in the water, he squeezed out all the water into the dish. Then he filled the water into a bottle. Whenever, any of his companions would become ill, Imaam Shaafi' would give the patient a little of this water to drink. Immediately on drinking the water, the patient would be cured. This was the effect of the *barkat* of the *Taqwa* in the body of Hadhrat Imaam Ahmad Bin Hambal (rahmatullah alayh).

The 'momentous calamity' predicted by Imaam Shaafi' (rahmatullah alayh) was a reference to the arrest, flogging and imprisonment of Imaam Ahmad by the then Khalifah Ma'moon who had subscribed to the Mu'tazili doctrine of the *Kalaam* of Allah being created whereas the belief of the Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jama'ah is that the *Kalaam* (Speech) of Allah is the uncreated eternal attribute of Allah Azza Wa Jal.

The Khalifah Ma'moon had ordered that Imaam Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh) be flogged for his refusal to retract this belief. This illustrious Imaam patiently suffered the torture, and remained steadfast in his proclamation of the Haqq.

THE HUMILITY OF THE LION

Binaan Hammaal (rahmatullah alayh) was a great Wali of the 4th century of the Islamic era. He hailed from Baghdad, but settled in Egypt. Once, Ibn Tuloon, the king of Egypt was greatly affronted and felt belittled by the admonition of Hadhrat Hammaal. The wrath of the king exceeded all bounds. He ordered that Hadhrat

Hammaal (rahmatullah alayh) be cast to a man-eating lion.

A large crowd gathered to witness the event. After Hadhrat Hammaal was placed in the arena, the hungry lion was let loose. With a roar the lion leapt in the direction of Hadhrat Hammaal who was standing calmly. Not a sign of fear or panic was seen on him. When the lion reached Hadhrat Hammaal its roar and rage had disappeared. It behaved like a tame puppy smelling the great Wali of Allah Ta'ala. It did not harm a hair of Hadhrat Hammaal (rahmatullah alayh).

The crowd, and the king with his entourage were astonished at this wonderful spectacle. Finally the lion was returned to its enclosure and Hadhrat Hammaal was set free. When he was asked about the state of his heart at the time the lion was smelling / licking him, Hadhrat Hammaal said: "I was reflecting on the differences of the Ulama on the mas'alah pertaining to the saliva of a lion – whether it was pure or impure."

A PIOUS PRINCESS

Once a princess passed by the hut in which lived Hadhrat Abu Shuaib Baraathi (rahmatullah alayh) who had renounced the world and had devoted his time and life for the worship of Allah Ta'ala. Although the princess lived in a palace, her heart was attracted to the piety of this Buzrug and the simplicity of his hut. She sent a proposal of marriage to him. Hadhrat Abu Shuaib responded: "If you wish to attain your goal (i.e. Allah's Pleasure and the Aakhirah) then change your garments of opulence and your lifestyle. Only then will you attain your objective."

The pious princes accepted and the Nikah was performed. She bid farewell to the palace and took up residence with her husband in the hut. When she arrived in the hut, she saw a piece of mat which was the ‘bedding’ of Hadhrat Abu Shuaib. The princess said: “As long as you retain this mat, I shall not live here. I have heard that the earth proclaims: ‘O Son of Aadam! Today you have erected a barrier between you and me. But tomorrow you will reside in my bowels.’ Now wherefore do you erect this barrier between yourself and the earth?” Immensely delighted with his wife’s attitude of *Zuhd*, Hadhrat Abu Shuaib threw away the mat.

The princess remained with him in the hut for many years devoting her time to the ibaadat of Allah Ta’ala until Maut claimed her – Rahmatullah alayha. (*Zuhd* is the attitude of renunciation. The world and its love are sacrificed for the sake of Allah’s Pleasure.)

IBRAAHEEM – KHALILULLAH

“And Allah made Ibraahim (His) Friend.”

(An-Nisa’, aayat 125)

Allah Ta’ala awarded the title, Khalilullaah (The Friend of Allah) to Hadhrat Nabi Ibraahim (alayhis salaam). Why did Allah Ta’ala bestow this wonderful accolade to Nabi Ibraahim (alaynhis salaam)?

Nabi Ibraahim (alayhis salaam) was extremely hospitable and kind to guests. He would go out of the way to search for people to join him in meals. One day he went out in search of someone to join him for meals, but he found no one. When he returned to his home, he found a man standing inside. With surprise, Nabi Ibraahim (alayhis salaam) said: “O servant of Allah!

Who permitted you to enter my home without my permission?”

The Man: “I entered with the permission of my Rabb.”

Nabi Ibraahim: “And who are you?”

The Man: “I am Malakul Maut. My Rabb sent me to one of His servants to convey to him the glad tidings that Allah Ta’ala has befriended him.”

Nabi Ibraahim: “And who is this person? I take oath by Allah! If you inform me who he is, and even if he lives in the furthest land, I shall most certainly go to him and I shall be his servant until Maut separates us.”

Malakul Maut: “In fact, you are that servant whom Allah has befriended.”

In astonishment, Nabi Ibraahim (alayhis salaam) exclaimed: “I?”

Malakul Maut: “Yes, you.”

Nabi Ibraahim: “Why did Allah Ta’ala make me His friend?”

Malakul Maut: “Verily, you give to people, and you do not ask anything from them.”

A LESSON IN HUMILITY

Once when Hadhrat Khwaajah Ali Seerjaani (rahmatullah alayh) sat down to have his meal, he supplicated to Allah Ta’ala: “O Allah! Send a guest to share the food with me.” Soon a dog appeared from the door of the Musajid which was close by. Hadhrat Seerjaani chased the dog away. The dog departed. Nearby from the grave of Hadhrat Shah Shuja’ Kirmaani (rahmatullah alayh), a voice spoke and said: “O Khwaajah! You had desired a guest to join you. Why have you buffeted him?”

As he heard the reprimand, Khwaajah, taking the food with him, ran in the direction the dog went, but to his grief, he could not find the dog. He continued the search from lane to lane. Finally he set out towards the wilderness. After prolonged searching, he saw the dog sleeping in a corner. Khwaajah Saheb placed all the food in front of the dog. The dog opened its eyes but did not even look at the food. Fear and grief overcame Khwaajah Sahib. He repented, reciting *Istighfaar*. He removed his turban from his head and said: "I have repented."

Suddenly the dog spoke in a human voice and said: "O Khwaajah! You have done well. You muster up courage to supplicate for a guest whereas you should supplicate for (spiritual) eyes. If it was not for the blessedness of Shah (i.e. Shah Shuja'), you would have seen your fate. Was-salaam." So saying, the dog departed.

SHAH SHUJA'S ADMONITION

Admonishing his mureedeen (disciples), Hadhrat Shah Shuja' Kirmaani (rahmatullah alayh) said:

"Abandon the world, repent and shun the desires of the nafs (bestial capacity in man), then you shall attain the goal (of Divine Proximity). Abstain from lies, gossip and stealing. The sign of *Wara'* (Taqwa of a very high standard) is abstention from *Mushtabahaat* (doubtful things). Perpetual grief is the sign of fear for Allah Ta'ala. The excellence of a man remains with him as long as he does not consider others to have lesser excellence than him. When he gains the notion of his superiority, his excellence is eliminated. If a man of

wilaayat (i.e. a Saint) advertises his wilaayat (sainthood), it will be snatched away from him.”

SERVING THE NEEDY

Hadhrat Ibn Mas’ood (radhiyallahu anhu) narrated that among the nations of bygone times there was a great sinner who after his death was ushered into the Divine Presence. This sinner was an embodiment of sin and transgression. From head to feet he was contaminated with sin. The only virtue he had was his practice of selling goods on credit to the poor. He would not refuse the poor, and when people tendered false coins as payment he would not refuse acceptance. Frequently he would comment: “Perhaps Allah Ta’ala will accept my false deeds and forgive me.”

Allah Ta’ala announced to him: “When such a lowly and miserable being as you had accepted false coins and served the poor, then what is expected of Me Who is the King of all the worlds? Go, you are forgiven. A place in Jannatul Firdaus has been awarded to you.” (*Bustaanul Auliya*)

LOVE FOR SOLITUDE AND ANONYMITY

The intensity of his love for solitude and anonymity drove Hadhrat Uwais Qarni (rahmatullah alayh), the renowned Taabi-ee, to flee from human beings. He inhabited desolate places, and passed his life in the mountains and wildernesses. In some Hadith narrations it is mentioned that on the Day of Qiyaamah, Hadhrat Uwais Qarni (rahmatullah alayh) will enter Jannat in a concourse of seventy thousand Malaaikeh (Angels), each one of them being identical in the appearance of Hadhrat

Uwais. Every Angel will look just like Hadhrat Uwais (rahmatullah alayh). In this way his anonymity will be ensured even in Jannat in fulfilment of his desire to remain unknown to others. Only a few selected servants of Allah Ta'ala will recognize Hadhrat Uwais in Jannat.

ABSTENTION FROM MUSHTABAH

Once Hadhrat Uwais Qarni (rahmatullah alayh) was overcome with hunger. He did not have a morsel of food for three days. Extreme hunger constrained him to eat some leaves from a tree. Suddenly he saw in front of him on the ground a pile of gold coins. He ignored it and continued chewing the leaves. Soon there appeared near to him a goat with a loaf of warm bread in its mouth. The goat was beckoning him to take the bread. Hadhrat Uwais, ignoring the goat, thought: "I do not know for whom this bread is intended." As this thought crossed his mind, the goat speaking in human language said: 'O Uwais! This is your Rizq sent to you by the True Razzaaq (Allah, The Sustainer and Provider). Now being convinced that it was rizq sent to him by Allah Ta'ala, he took the bread and offered his gratitude to Allah Ta'ala.

A LESSON OF CONTENTMENT

Once Hadhrat Maalik Bin Dinaar (rahmatullah alayh) dreamt someone saying: "A servant of Allah desires to meet you". The location of the Buzrug was given in the dream. However, being a dream, Hadhrat Maalik ignored it. When he saw the same dream several consecutive nights, he decided to go to the place indicated to him in the dream. When he reached the place, he saw a Buzrug reciting the Athaan at the door of the Musjid.

After the Athaan, Hadhrat Maalik greeted the Buzrug. The Buzrug responding, said: “Wa-Alaikumus Salaam, O Maalik Ibn Dinaar!” In astonishment, Hadhrat Maalik said to himself: “How did he know my name?” The Buzrug said: “Is this cause for astonishment? Allah Ta’ala sent you here, and He informed me of your name.”

Both performed Salaat. The Buzrug took Hadhrat Maalik to his home, and served him some dried corn bread. Hadhrat Maalik commented: “Is there any salt to eat with the bread?” The Shaikh arranged for some salt by pawning his water-jug at the nearby shop. After eating the bread with the salt, Hadhrat Maalik said: “Alhamdulillah! Allah Ta’ala has granted me contentment with only bread and salt. I acquire the taste of gravy from only salt.” It was said to him: Subhaanallaah! If you were truly a man of contentment, there would not have been the need for us to pawn our water-jug. For the past seventeen years we had lived without salt.” Hearing this, Hadhrat Maalik let out a scream of anguish and set off into the wilderness to contemplate and engage in soul-searching.

The effect of this episode compelled him to renounce eating any delicious food for the rest of his life. He also renounced eating fruit. He contented himself with dry bread every day until the end of his life. He derived great comfort and contentment from the frugality of his lifestyle.

(The episodes of the Auliya are narrated to gain spiritual enthusiasm and to provide us with the ability to meditate and reflect on our wasteful, selfish and ungrateful ways of life. While people are not expected to give practical

expression to the austere methods of the Auliya, they are expected to take lesson and abstain from ways and measures which are in conflict with the Shariah.)

FEAR FOR MAUT

Hadhrat Maalik Bin Dinaar (rahmatullah alayh) was perpetually overcome by fear of Maut and Allah's Punishment. On the Day of his demise, he commented: "Would that I was never born so that I could be saved from the calamities of this world and the Akhirah!" That very same evening, a Voice audibly exclaimed: "We have forgiven Maalik Bin Dinaar by Our grace and mercy." Precisely at that moment, Hadhrat Maalik, raised his Kalimah finger, recited Kalimah Shahaadat and departed from this earthly realm.

THE REWARD OF SERENITY AND PLEASURE

After the death of Hadhrat Maalik Bin Dinaar (rahmatullah alayh), a Buzrug saw in a dream Jannat in exquisite resplendence. A young man with an appearance which outshone the sun, was seated on a resplendent throne near to a wonderful tree. A thousand beings were in attendance. The astonished Buzrug asked one of the beings: "What is this gathering all about? Who is the young man seated on the throne, and who are you all?" It was said to him: "The young man on the throne is Maalik Bin Dinaar who on earth was always engrossed in the obedience of His True Maker. We are a gathering of Angels who convey to him the glad tidings of Jannat."

RISE AND FALL IN THE SPIRITUAL REALM

Once after performing Isha' Salaat in Baitul Maqdis (in Musjidul Aqsa), Hadhrat Ibraaahim Bin Adham (rahmatullah alayh) concealed himself in a corner and engaged in Thikrullaah. Sometime after midnight he saw two Angels descending from the heaven. Inside the Musjid by the Mihraab, the one Angel said to his companion: "It appears that there is a human being in the Musjid." The other Angel said: "Yes, he is Ibraaahim Bin Adham." The first Angel: "Is it that same Ibraaahim Bin Adham of Balkh who had attained the rank of Wilaayat (Sainthood) after having made thousands of efforts, then fell from that lofty rank on account of an error? His condition is pitiful and lamentable." The second Angel: "Yes, it is he." The first Angel: "What was his error which caused his fall from the lofty rank of Wilaayat?" The second Angel: "Once he bought some dates at a shop in Basrah. He picked up a date from the floor, and thinking that it was his date, he ate it. In consequence he fell from his lofty rank of Wilaayat."

On hearing this conversation, Ibraaahim Bin Adham was beyond himself with grief. Wailing and crying profusely, he left the Musjid and set off for Basrah. When he reached the shop, he bought some dates. After paying, he handed the dates to the shop-owner, and narrated his episode. He implored the shop-owner to forgive him for having consumed the date which did not belong to him. The shop-owner readily forgave him. Now contented, Hadhrat Ibrahim returned to Musjidul Aqsa.

After some time, he was again alone in Musjid Aqsa. Late at night, he observed the two Angels once again

appearing in the Musjid. The first Angel: “There appears to be a human being here.” Second Angel: “It is that same Ibraahim who had fallen from his lofty pedestal, then after much repentance, remorse and tears, he was reinstated to his former rank of Wilaayat.”

THE REWARD OF DIVINE VISION

After the demise of Hadhrat Ibraahim Bin Adham (rahmatullah alayh), a Buzrug seeing him in a dream enquired: “How did you fare by Allah Ta’ala?” Ibraahim Bin Adham replied: “The mercy and kindness of Allah, The King, The Rabb, The All-Forgiver and Most Merciful are boundless. I am unable to narrate His munificence. He awarded me an abode in Baabush Shams.” The Buzrug: “Where is Baabush Shams?” Hadhrat Ibraahim: “It is a marvellous abode under the Lofty Arsh of Allah Ta’ala. The most wonderful bounty of this abode is the daily Vision of Allah Ta’ala.”

Those who are fortunate to reside in this wonderful abode behold the Divine Vision of Allah Ta’ala every day.

HAPPY OCCASIONS OF SERENITY

Prior to his reformation, Hadhrat Ibraahim Bin Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh) was the proud king of the Land of Balkh (which today is in Afghanistan). He had lived in utmost luxury, splendour and pomp. After his abandonment of the throne of Balkh and renunciation of the world, once the people saw him in his state of poverty with dishevelled hair and tattered garments. They said to him: “During your reign of Balkh, you had every occasion of comfort and happiness. Have you seen

any occasion of happiness in your present state of mendacity?" He replied: "In my state of faqeerī (mendacity) I experience occasions of bliss and happiness three times.

Once while dressed with old and tattered garments and with long overgrown hair I was seated in a ferry boat. On board was a jester who made much fun of me. He would frequently tug at my hair and buffet me with his fists. The other passengers derived considerable pleasure. My plight evinced much mirth and laughter from them. At that time I derived peace and happiness from the humiliation which my evil nafs was subjected to.

The second occasion transpired in the same ferry boat. Suddenly the boat was caught in a storm. Someone in the boat remarked that the storm would not abate as long as a man was not thrown overboard. All eyes fell on me. I was the candidate to be cast overboard. Again I derived immense relief and serenity from the humiliation which was inflicted on my nafs. However, before the proposal of casting me overboard could be executed, the storm abated.

On the third occasion of serenity, I was overwhelmed with exhaustion. I fell asleep in a Musjid. The people there objected and ordered my expulsion from the Musjid. But I was utterly exhausted and unable to stand and walk out. They grabbed me by the feet, dragged me to the entrance and pushed me down the stairs. The Musjid had three high steps. As I rolled down, my head was bashed against the rocky steps and it bled profusely. Along with the happiness of the humiliation on my nafs, I experienced the revelation of extremely lofty spiritual

states. As I landed on each step downwards, Allah Ta'ala revealed a vast spiritual domain to me. With each step a new spiritual domain was revealed. The serenity was immense. When the rolling ceased at the bottom of the third step, I lamented at the cessation of the revelation of spiritual realms. I wished that the steps were endless so that the states of serenity I was experiencing would continue endlessly. In fact, I was not descending down the steps. With each step I experienced ascension.

THE REWARD OF MORE THAN 100 HAJJ

A man came to Hadhrat Bishr Haafi (rahmatullah alayh) and said: "Hadhrat, I have saved 200 dinaars (gold coins) from my halaal earnings. I desire to proceed for (Nafl) Hajj."

Hadhrat Bishr: "Do you desire to go for Hajj to observe the fun taking place or do you wish to go for the Pleasure of Allah Ta'ala?"

Man: "Hadhrat, I wish to go for the sake of Allah's Pleasure."

Hadhrat Bishr: "Go and distribute the money to ten Fuqara or to ten orphans or to ten persons who find it difficult to support their families. The thawaab of bringing peace and comfort to the hearts of hard-pressed Muslims is greater than the thawaab of more than 100 Nafl Hajj."

Man: "Hadhrat, right now the desire of Hajj is overwhelming in me."

Hadhrat Bishr: "It is now clear that the means of your earning are not virtuous. (i.e. his wealth was contaminated). Until you do not squander your wealth in an unlawful manner, you will not be gratified."

THE SECRET OF FAQEERI

(Faqeeri literally means the state of poverty. In the terminology of the Auliya it refers to a poor person of lofty spiritual state – to a Buzrug who has renounced the wealth and pleasures of the world in his pursuit of the Pleasure of Allah Ta'ala.)

A lad came to Hadhrat Zunnun Misri (rahmatullah alayh) and said: “Hadhrat, I have inherited 100,000 Ashrafis (gold coins). I wish to distribute it all to the Fuqara in your gathering.” Hadhrat Zunnun advised the lad: “As long as you have not reached buloogh (puberty) it is not permissible for you to spend your money.” The lad being very intelligent, remained silent and departed.

After attaining puberty, the lad returned with the money and distributed it all to the Fuqara and Masaakeen. Some time thereafter the lad returned and found the Fuqara in dire straits of poverty. In his heart he lamented: “If only I had wealth now, I would have contributed it all to these Fuqara.” The heartfelt generosity of the lad became apparent to Hadhrat Zunnun (most probably by way of kashf). He said to himself: “The lad has not yet understood the secret of Faqeeri.”

He called the lad and instructed him to go to a certain *attaar* (perfume-maker and seller), and to buy certain chemicals. He explained a method of preparation by which three clots were to be made with the chemicals. Then cotton had to be thread through the three clots. The lad obeyed the instructions. Soon he brought the string with the three hardened clots. Hadhrat Zunnun recited something and blew on the clots which instantaneously were transformed into dazzling gems, the glitter of which

hurt the eyes. Then he instructed the youth to take the gems to the jeweller to obtain a value. But he was not to sell the gems. The lad did as he was instructed.

The jeweller valued each gem at 100 Ashrafis (gold coins). Hadhrat Zunnun said to the lad: “Son, take these gems and dump them in the river. And, understand that a Faqeer is not in need of wealth. He is in need of Wisaal-e-Ilaahi (i.e. union with Allah Ta’ala).” Thus, the lad understood the secret of the poverty of the Auliya. There is peace and serenity in their poverty which is never a hardship for them.

THE NOOR OF THIKRULLAAH

Hadhrat Zunnun Misri (rahmatullah alayh) narrated: “Once in the sacred precincts of Musjidul Haraam I saw an African. When he recited something, his face literally dazzled with Noor like the sun. When he discontinued whatever he was reciting, the Noor would disappear. I was astonished. I approached him and asked for an explanation. He said that whenever he engaged in Thikr, his entire body would literally become radiant of Noor (celestial light). When he stopped his Thikr, the Noor would disappear. Subhaanallaah! How wonderful is the Thikr of Allah, and how wonderful is the Noor accompanying it!”

THE EFFECT OF THIKRULLAAH

Hadhrat Zunnun Misri (rahmatullah alayh) rarely spoke. His silence was excessive. He was perpetually engrossed in Thikrullaah. Due to his permanent state of silence, people believed that he was mad. The day he died was intensely hot. The weather was extreme. Only a few

sincere peasants ventured to out into the heat to attend to the Janaazah. As the Janaazah was being carried, huge flocks of birds appeared and formed a canopy of shade over the Janaazah and the small procession. When people from their houses observed this miraculous event, they rushed out to accompany the Janaazah.

Along the way to the qabrustaan, they passed by a Musjid. It was Salaat time. When the Muath-thin proclaimed: *“Ash-hadu al la ilaha il lallaah”*, Hadhrat Zunnun removed his hand from the kafan and pointed his Kalimah finger. The people were astonished. Thinking that he was alive, they opened the kafan to examine him. But they confirmed his death.

THE SUPPLICATION OF BAAYAZID

Hadhrat Yahya Bin Muaaz (rahmatullah alayh) narrates that once after Isha Hadhrat Baayazid was engaged the entire night in Salaat. At the time of Subh Saadiq, after Sajdah he supplicated: “O My Allah! A group of your devotees had supplicated to behold Your Vision. You granted them the power to walk over the oceans and to fly like birds in the air. They were contented with this bestowal. I seek refuge with You from it.

O My Allah! A group of Your devotees searched for You. When they reached Your Presence, you bestowed to them the power of traversing continents in seconds. They were contented with this. I seek refuge with You from it.

O My Allah! A group of Your devotees in Your pursuit, ultimately reached Your Presence. You opened up all the treasures of the earth for them. They became contented. I seek refuge with You from it.

O My Allah! A group of Your devotees engrossed in searching for You. You linked them with Hadhrat Khidr. They became contented with his meeting. I seek refuge with You from it.

O My Allah! A group of your devotees searched for Your Vision. You displayed Jannat to them, and they became contented. I seek refuge with You from it.”

In this manner Hadhrat Baayazid enumerated 27 groups of devotees in his supplication, and he sought refuge from all their accomplishments. Concluding his Dua, he supplicated: “O Allah! I desire not the world nor anything in it. I seek You from You.”

SLAYED BY DIVINE LOVE

Once in a desolate wilderness Hadhrat Baayazid saw the dead bodies of a hundred Auliya scattered all over the show. Animated by Divine Love, he exclaimed: “O My True Beloved One! For how long will You continue slaying Your beloved devotees in this manner?” The Divine Voice responded: “This is the way in which I shall continue slaying My beloved devotees. But on the Day of Qiyaamah I shall discharge the Diyat of their blood.” (*Diyat or Blood-Money is the compensation ordered by the Shariah which the killer has to pay to the heirs of the person he has killed.*) Hadhrat Baayazid asked: “O Sovereign of the Day of Resurrection! What is their Diyat?” The Divine Voice answered: “The diyat of the people of the world is gold and silver. The Diyat of those killed by Divine Love is the Divine Vision.”

REWARDED WITH THE TREASURE OF IMAAN

Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mubaarak (rahmatullah alayh) narrates: “Once when I went for Hajj, I went for ziyaarat to the Raudhah Mubaarak (the Holy Grave of Rasulullah — sallallahu alayhi wasallam). I spent the entire day at the Raudhah, but I was not satisfied. I spent the night there as well. While I was in a state between sleep and wakefulness, I saw Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) emerging from his Raudhah Mubaarak. He came close to me and said: ‘O Abdullah Ibn Mubaarak! When you return to your home in Baghdad, go to the Yahudi Bahraam and convey my Salaam to him. Tell him that Allah is pleased with him and has forgiven him.’ *(In the vision, Rasulullah – sallallahu alayhi wasallam – had informed him of the address of the Yahudi.)*

Immediately my eyes opened and I set off for Bagdhad. When I reached Bagdhad, I went to the home of Bahraam and said: ‘O Bahraam! Tell me about your good deeds.’ The Yahudi said: ‘I do not even dream of good deeds. I have no good deeds. However, once I passed by a dilapidated hut of a destitute Muslim lady who had several little children. All the children were crying much because of hunger. She did not have a morsel of food in her hut. I stood outside with tears gushing from my eyes. I rushed home and brought whatever food I had. I called the children out of the hut, and gave them the food and some gold coins. This is the only good deed which I had ever practised.’

I (Hadhrat Ibn Mubaarak) said to him: ‘O Bahraam Yahudi! Sayyudul Mursaleen, Rahmatul Lil Aalameen has conveyed his Salaam to you and has said that Allah

Ta'ala has accepted your deed. He has forgiven you.' When Bahraam heard this, he spontaneously recited: *Lailaha il lallahu Muhammadur Rasulullah.*"

A DEVOTEE OF ALLAH

Once in mid-winter Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mubaarak (rahmatullah alayh) saw an ill-clad slave in the marketplace of Nishapur. The slave was shivering of the cold. Hadhrat Ibn Mubaarak said: "Why do you not ask your master to provide warm clothing to save you from this suffering?" The slave smiled and said: "The condition of this slave is not hidden from his Master (i.e. Allah Ta'ala). He knows and sees my condition. I will ask Him only if my condition is hidden from Him." Tears welled up in the eyes of Hadhrat Ibn Mubaarak. He said: "O Slave! What a wonderful arrow of Divine Love has struck you! I have learnt the Road (of Divine Love) from you."

THE FEAR OF ALLAH SUFFICES

Once Hadhrat Sufyaan Thauri (rahmatullah alayh) and Hadhrat Shaybaan Raa-ee (rahmatullah alayh) were together on a journey. As they passed through a wilderness a lion stood in their path. Hadhrat Sufyaan became fearful. Hadhrat Shaybaan said: "Fear not. His Creator is Allah The One." He stepped forward and twisted the ear of the lion. The lion meekly wagged its tail. They loaded their provisions on the lion and reached Makkah Muazzamah.

A GARDEN OF JANNAT

Hadhrat Sufyaan Thauri (rahmatullah alayh) said: “Whoever remembers the Qabr (grave), will find it a garden from the Gardens of Jannat. Whoever forgets the Qabr will find it a pit from the Pits of Jahanum.

ALLAH REPAYS MUNIFICENTLY

It is mentioned in the Hadith that Allah Ta’ala fulfils the needs of those who fulfil the needs of others. Once a poor lady with her naked baby in her arms came to a house begging. The lady of the house was also poor. She came to the door with her baby. The lady beggar pleaded for a garment for her baby. The lady of the house removed her own baby’s garment and handed it to the beggar who made Dua: “May Allah Ta’ala dress your baby with a garment of His grace and mercy.” As soon as the beggar had departed, a beautiful kurtah miraculously fell from above and fitted itself onto the body of the baby. This miraculous kurtah was worn by the baby for several years. As the baby grew, the kurtah too grew. During winter, the kurtah would be warm, and in summer it would become cool.

IBN MUBAARAK’S UNADULTERATED HONESTY

At one stage in his life, Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mubaarak was employed as a caretaker of the fruit orchard of a wealthy person. One day the owner went to his orchard and instructed Hadhrat Ibn Mubaarak to bring a sweet pomegranate. Ibn Mubaarak picked a pomegranate and presented it to his employer. When the owner tasted it, he found it to be extremely sour. With some annoyance he

instructed Ibn Mubaarak to bring a sweet pomegranate. Another one was presented to the owner. However, this one too was very sour. The owner rebuking his employee said: "Ibn Mubaarak! Despite being so long in this orchard you are ignorant of the quality of its fruit. You are unable to distinguish between sweet and sour pomegranates!"

Hadhrat Ibn Mubaarak replied: "What you are saying is correct. Although I have worked in this orchard for several years, I have never tasted any of its fruit, hence I am unable to distinguish between sweet and sour pomegranates." The owner was astonished and said to himself: "I have never met such an honest man. It is improper to employ such a pious man as a caretaker of the orchard. He is fit to be made the crown on one's head."

The owner immediately dismissed Ibn Mubaarak from his employ and took him to his house. After spending a few days in the home of his former employer, the latter gave his one and only daughter in marriage to Hadhrat Ibn Mubaarak. Soon thereafter, his father-in-law passed away leaving an immense amount of wealth which was all inherited by the daughter. He had no other relatives. Thus Hadhrat Ibn Mubaarak became a man of great worldly wealth in addition to the spiritual wealth which Allah Ta'ala had bestowed on him.

THE CALL OF THE DAMSELS OF JANNAT

Hadhrat Suhail (rahmatullah alayh) frequently visited Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mubaarak. One day when he was leaving the home of Ibn Mubaarak, he said: "I shall never again visit your home. Today a few girls from on top of

the roof of your house, were calling, ‘Suhail! Suhail! Come! This has extremely offended me.’ He then left.

After his departure, Hadhrat Ibn Mubaarak said to his companions: “Let us go and participate in the Janaazah (funeral) of Hadhrat Suhail.” The companions in surprise said: “Suhail has just left us now, sound and healthy. What constrained you to say that he has died?” He said: “Despite there being no girls in my house, Suhail heard several girls from my roof calling him. They were not human girls. They were Damsels of Jannat who came to take Suhail with them.” When they reached the home of Suhail, they discovered that preparations for his Janaazah were being made.

THE MEANING OF TAWAADHU’

Once when someone asked Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mubaarak to define Tawaadhu’ (Humility), he said: “When a man of lesser wealth and worldly possessions comes to you, and you regard yourself to be inferior to him, and you love guests more than anyone else, that is the meaning of Tawaadhu’.”

FOUR ADVICES

Hadhrat Sufyaan Thauri (rahmatullah alayh) said to Hadhrat Haatim (rahmatullah alayh): “I shall apprise you of four virtues which most people ignore. (1) Reviling and insulting people makes one oblivious of Divine Remembrance. (2) Envy for the progress and prosperity of others engenders ingratitude towards Allah Ta’ala. (3) Accumulation of haraam wealth dispels remembrance of the ultimate end and the remembrance of Allah Ta’ala. (4) Banishing fear of Allah and hope in Him lead to kufr.

FOUR NOBLE MEN

Hadhrat Sufyaan Thauri (rahmatullah alayh) said: “Four types of persons are the noblest in creation. An Aalim who is a Zaahid. A Faqeeh who is a Sufi. A wealthy person who is humble. A Durwaish who is Shaakir.”

Zaahid: A person who has banished the love of the world from his heart and is contented with a life of simplicity, frugality and austerity.

Faqeeh: A person who has profound Knowledge of the Deen.

Sufi: A person who is imbued with the attributes of moral excellence and engages in constant Thikrullaah.

Durwaish: A poor Sufi. A mendicant wandering in the pursuit of Divine Love.

Shaakir: A person who is always grateful and thankful for the bounties of Allah Ta’ala.

THE ‘SICKNESS’ OF DIVINE LOVE

When Hadhrat Sufyaan Thauri (rahmatullah alayh) became bedridden with severe illness, the Khalifah (Islamic Ruler) of the time sent his top physician to treat him. The physician was a fire-worshipper. After examining Hadhrat Sufyaan Thauri (rahmatullah alayh) he said: “Divine Love and Fear have split his liver into shreds. A religion which produces men of such love and fear, can only be a religion of the Truth.” At that very time, Allah Ta’ala imbued his heart with hidaayat. The physician proclaimed the Kalimah and recited: ‘*Laa ilaha il lallaahu Muhammadur Rasulullaah*’.

When the Khalifah heard of the conversion of his physician, he delightfully exclaimed: “I thought that I

had sent a physician to an ailing man. In reality, I sent an ailing man to the physician.”

FOUR MEASURES FOR DIVINE PLEASURE

Hadhrat Shaqeeq Balkhi (rahmatullah alayh) said: “I acquired the Pleasure of Allah in four things: (1) Lack of concern with regards to rizq (sustenance). (2) Ikhlāas (sincerity) in all actions. (3) Regarding shaitaan and emotional desires as my enemies. (4) Accumulating provisions for the Aakhirah.

Lack of concern in the matter of Rizq: This means that one should never be fearful regarding one's worldly provisions whether food, clothes or shelter. Allah Ta'ala has undertaken the responsibility of providing our Rizq. He is the Sole Razzaaq (Provider). Our Rizq is predetermined and pre-measured. Our Rizq follows us like our shadows. Our worldly term of life will expire only after we have consumed our last morsel of predetermined Rizq. There is, therefore, no need to worry about tomorrow. The One who fed us in the wombs of our mothers, and the One Who fed us yesterday, will feed us today and tomorrow.

GO TO YOUR ABODE!

One day while addressing the people, Hadhrat Shaqeeq Balkhi (rahmatullah alayh) commenting on the general attitude of indifference and *ghaflat* (obliviousness) of the masses, said: “O People! If you are corpses, go to your abode in the cemetery. If you are little children, go to the Maktab to acquire knowledge. If you are insane, go to your abode in the madhouse. If you are kaafir, then go to

your abode in the lands of the kuffaar. If you are Muslims, then adopt the Way of Islam.”

THE BOUNTIES OF POVERTY

Hadhrat Shaqeeq Balkhi (rahmatullah alayh) said: “There are three bounties obtainable in poverty. (1) A peaceful heart. (2) A life of comfort. (3) Ease in the Reckoning of the Aakhirah. On the contrary, there are three disadvantages in wealth: (1) No freedom from worldly engrossment. (2) Perpetual worry and frustration. (3) Severity in the Reckoning of the Aakhirah.

A HIDDEN WALI

Hadhrat Shaqeeq Balkhi (rahmatullah alayh) narrated the following episode:

“Once along the journey to Makkah, I halted at a place. I saw a young handsome man wrapped in a blanket sitting one side. I said to myself: ‘He must be inconveniencing people with his beggary. I should counsel him.’ With this intention I approached the person. He looked at me and said: ‘O Shaqeeq Balkhi! Do not entertain suspicions about the devotees of Allah Ta’ala. Such suspicion is a major sin.’ Saying this, he promptly disappeared from my sight. I now understood that he was a Wali of Allah, for he had exposed the innermost thought of my heart. I resolved to meet him and request him to make dua for me. I ran in the direction he had disappeared, but he I could not find him. Full of regret and grief I proceeded to Makkah Muazzamah.

Some time thereafter I passed through a village, I saw the same Wali performing Salaat. His whole body was shuddering on account of fear of Allah, and tears were

rolling down his cheeks. I sat down near to him. After completing his Salaat, he looked at me and said: ‘You have expelled the idea which you had about me, and you have repented. Allah is The Forgiver.’ He then promptly disappeared from my sight. I said to myself: ‘He must be one of the Abdaal. On two occasions he revealed the innermost thoughts of my heart.’

After a few days I saw this young man at a well with a small bucket. As he lowered his bucket into the well, it slipped from his hand and went to the bottom. The young man supplicated: ‘O Allah! You know that this bucket is the only asset I have.’ Even before he completed his Dua, the water in the well bubbled to the surface with the bucket floating on top. The Wali took the bucket and drank from the water. Seeing me, he offered me the bucket to drink from. After I drank the deliciously sweet water, I neither felt thirst or hunger for many days. I pleaded with him to tell me who he was.

It transpired that he was Musa Kaazim, the son of Hadhrat Jaa’far Saadiq (rahmatullah alayh).

THE KHALIFAH’S DREAM

Once, Khalifah Haaron Ar-Rashid saw Malakul Maut in dream. The Khalifah asked: “How much time of my life remains?” Malakul Maut, without speaking made a sign with the five fingers of his hand. The next day the Khalifah asked many Ulama for an interpretation. No one was able to present a satisfactory meaning. Finally, Haaron Rashid asked Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh). He said: “With his five fingers Malakul Maut indicated towards the five events mentioned in Surah Luqmaan. Only Allah Ta’ala is aware thereof, viz. the

knowledge of the Hour (Qiyaamah); the knowledge of the rains; the knowledge of whatever is in the wombs; the knowledge of what one will earn tomorrow, and the knowledge of the place (and time) of one's death. This knowledge is only by Allah.

PROCLAMATION OF THE HAQQ

Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) advising his Student, Imaam Abu Yusuf (rahmatullah alayh), said:

“If anyone innovates a bid’ah in the Shariah, publicly expose his error to prevent others from following him regardless of the rank and status of the innovator or whether he is associated with the government. In the proclamation of the Haqq, Allah Ta’ala is your Helper. He safeguards His Deen.

ADVICES OF IMAAM ABU HANIFAH

- * Keep association with the public in general, and with the wealthy in particular, at a minimum, otherwise they will labour under the notion that you are expecting some worldly gain from them.
- * Refrain from frequenting the market-places, shops and eating in the street.
- * Abstain from debating with laymen and people of lowly intellect.
- * Laugh very little, for laughter corrodes the heart.
- * Whatever activity you embark on, do it with dignity and peacefully.
- * When walking in the road, do not look hither and thither.
- * Be independent in all things, even during poverty.
- * Always bear in mind taqwa and honesty.

- * When the Athaan is sounded, immediately prepare to go to the Musjid.
- * Keep a few fasts every month.
- * Do not omit on any day Tilaawat of the Qur'aan Majeed.
- * Abstain totally from play and amusement.
- * Conceal the faults of your neighbour.
- * Beware of the people of bid'ah.
- * Be constant in Amr Bil Ma'roof Nahy Anil Munkar (Commanding righteousness and prohibiting evil).

THE TAQWA OF IMAAM ABU HANIFAH

Once on an intensely hot day, Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) and Imaam Abu Yusuf (rahmatullah alayh) were passing through the streets of the market place. Due to the intensity of the heat, Imaam Abu Hanifah walked close to the rows of shops so as to be in the shade. As they neared a building, Imaam Abu Hanifah veered away from it and walked in the street at a distance from the building. Now he and Imaam Abu Yusuf were walking in the fierce heat. After they had passed that particular building, Imaam Abu Hanifah again began walking in the shade of the other buildings. Surprised at this action, Imaam Abu Yusuf asked the reason. Imaam Abu Hanifah said: "O Abu Yusuf, This building belongs to a Yahudi who owes me several thousand dinars. Do you not know that in Islam, deriving any benefit from a debtor is *riba* (interest)? I feared to derive the benefit of the shade from the house of my debtor. I therefore, stepped out to avoid gaining the benefit of the shade."

A TRUE AND AFFECTIONATE FRIEND

Hadhrat Yahya Bin Muaaz (rahmatullah alayh) said: “Your brother is he who alerts you to your faults, and your true friend is he who warns you of your sins.”

Hadhrat Daawood Taai (rahmatullah alayh) said: “Appoint an affectionate friend to constantly remind you of your faults. If he does not inform you of your faults, he cannot be your friend, for then your faults will remain with you and become known to others.”

THE SECLUSION OF DAAWOOD TAAI

When the people asked Hadhrat Daawood Taai (rahmatullah alayh) why he has completely severed ties with the people, he said: “It is futile to associate with people who conceal my faults from me, but reveal them to others. Neither can I be reformed in this way nor the others. Instead, they become guilty of the sin of spreading the faults of others.”

THE INHERITANCE OF DAAWOOD TAAI

Hadhrat Daawood Taai (rahmatullah alayh) had received his inheritance of 20 Ashrafis (gold coins) from his mother. He would spend one Ashrafi for the needs of an entire year. He would use the Ashrafi for only very pressing needs. After a few years when there was only one Ashrafi left which would suffice for the needs of one more year, Hadhrat Daawood Taai (rahmatullah alayh) called the barber. After the haircut, he gave the last Ashrafi to the barber. He renewed his Wudhu and engaged in Salaat. As he went into Sajdah, his final moment came and his soul departed from his earthly body.

ISTIGHNA' AND OBEDIENCE TO MOTHER

Hadhrat Daawood Taai (rahmatullah alayh) had renounced the world and spent almost all of his time in his home engrossed with the Thikr of Allah Ta'ala. He would rarely venture out of his home. Once the Khalifah Haroon Rashid in the company of Imaam Abu Yusuf (rahmatullah alayh) came to the home of Hadhrat Daawood Taai. When he saw the Khalifah, he locked his door. Despite repeated knocks, and calls for admission, Hadhrat Daawood Taai refused to open the door. He was averse to meeting rulers and those connected to them.

In exasperation, Imaam Abu Yusuf exclaimed from outside: "O Daawood! In the knowledge you have acquired did you see a mas'alah which says that you should not meet with a guest and that you should lock the door on him?" Hadhrat Taai replied: "Yes, the Knowledge which I am presently pursuing prohibits me from meeting the people of the world."

After all attempts to gain admission failed, Imaam Abu Yusuf went to complain by Hadhrat Daawood Taai's mother. When his mother instructed him to open the door for the guests, Hadhrat Daawood without the least hesitation opened the door and warmly welcomed the two honourable guests. His reaction now was the effect of obedience to his mother which the Shariah commands and which Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had emphasised considerably. He recalled the Hadith: "*Jannat lies under the feet of your mother.*"

ADMONITION FOR THE KHALIFAH

After some discussion, the Khalifah asked if he had any need. Hadhrat Daawood Taai said: “Yes, I want you to bring for me a bag of flour which you should carry on your head.” Surprised at this queer request, Haroon Rashid said: “I shall bring it during the night time.”

Hadhrat Daawood: “No, bring it during the day time.”

Khalifah: “Alright, I shall bring it via the wilderness route (i.e. not through the main road where the public would see him).”

Hadhrat Daawood: “No, bring it during the daytime on your head via the main road through the marketplace.”

Haroon Rashid remained silent. He did not comment further. This request posed an extremely difficult problem for the king. Hadhrat Daawood Taai then commented: “I have no need for the flour. I wanted to test you. You have unhesitatingly assumed the burden of the entire Ummah on your head, but you are unable to carry a tiny bag of flour on your head!”

Understanding the fearful implications of Hadhrat Daawood’s admonition, the Khalifah broke down into tears. He had brought with him a bag of pearls, diamonds and gold coins which he left at the feet of Hadhrat Daawood. He then departed sobbing. After his departure, Hadhrat Daawood Taai (rahmatullah alayh) threw the bag outside, scattering the contents in the alleyway as if these precious stones and gold were pebbles and stones. He commented: “All of this is the dunya, and I am a Faqeer for the sake of Allah Ta’ala. There is no relationship between the Faqeer and the dunya.” Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had said: *“Poverty is my pride.”*

This noble ‘pride’ of Istighna (Independence) radiated from Hadhrat Daawood Taai (rahmatullah alayh).

DUA FOR THE TRANSGRESSORS

Once Hadhrat Ma’roof Karkhi (rahmatullah alayh) with a few of his mureeds came by a group of evil doers who were singing and dancing. A mureed said: “Hadhrat curse these transgressors who are so flagrantly transgressing the Shariah so that they be destroyed and society be saved from their evil.” Hadhrat Ma’roof Karkhi (rahmatullah alayh) raised his hands and supplicated: “O Allah! Grant these people more and better happiness than what they are presently experiencing.” The mureeds were stunned with surprise.

The group of transgressors had heard the words of supplication emanating from Hadhrat Ma’roof. The hearts of people are in the control of Allah Ta’ala. The effect of the Dua was so overwhelming on the transgressors that they broke their musical instruments, and came crying to Hadhrat Ma’roof Karkhi. They sincerely repented and joined his circle of mureeds.

Addressing his disciples, Hadhrat Ma’roof Karkhi said: “O my Mureeds! All of them attained the goal (of Divine Proximity) without any *dharb*. Just reflect! How beautifully my hope has been fulfilled by Allah Ta’ala.”

Dharb literally means ‘to strike’. In this context it refers to the special method of thikr which involves striking the heart with the Name of Allah by movements of the head. It is a prescribed form of spiritual treatment which is unrelated to the Sunnah.

Guidance is the prerogative solely of Allah Ta'ala. Sometimes He transforms the heart in a second and the evil doer instantaneously becomes a Wali. In this regard Allah Ta'ala says in the Qur'aan Shareef: *"Allah draws to Himself whomever He wishes, and He guides whoever turns to Him in repentance."* Examples of instantaneous production of Auliya of high rank are the *Saahireen* (magicians) of Fir'oun. They were instantaneously transformed and became Auliya the very moment the Haqq was revealed to them with their defeat at the hands of Nabi Musaa (alayhis salaam).

BE CONTENTED AND GRATEFUL

Hadhrat Ma'roof Karkhi (rahmatullah alayh) said: "O People! Adopt Tawakkul (Trust) in Allah, and people will be unable to harm you. Be contented and happy with the bounties He bestows to you." The Qur'aan Majeed in corroboration of this advice says: "If you have Taqwa and adopt Sabr, never will their (the kuffaar's) plots harm you in any way whatsoever."

MA'ROOF KARKHI AND ALLAH'S VISION

After the death of Hadhrat Ma'roof Karkhi (rahmatullah alayh), he was seen in a dream by Hadhrat Sirri Saqati (rahmatullah alayh). Hadhrat Ma'roof was lying unconscious by the Arsh (Throne) of Allah Azza Wa Jal. In his dream, Hadhrat Saqati wondered in astonishment at the scene. He heard the Angels saying: "Ma'roof Karkhi will regain conscious only when He sees the Divine Vision."

A ROBBER AND MA'ROOF KARKHI'S SUPPLICATION

A robber was sentenced to death for his heinous crimes. He was hanged until he died. While his dead body was dangling, Hadhrat Ma'roof Karkhi (rahmatullah alayh) appeared. Beholding the awful scene, shivers went down his spine. He raised his hands and supplicated: "O Allah! This robber has tasted the punishment of his misdeeds here on earth. You are the Most Forgiving, The Most Merciful. If you forgive him, and bestow honour to him in both worlds, your treasures will not decrease by a dot."

As he made Dua, suddenly a Voice proclaimed loudly: "Whoever performs the Janaazah Salaat of this hanged man will attain a lofty rank in the Hereafter." All the people of the city heard the proclamation from the Unseen realm. The people rushed out of their homes. They lowered the body with respect and honour, gave it ghushl and kafan. The forgiven robber was buried honourably. In this way did Allah Ta'ala accept and fulfil the Dua of Hadhrat Ma'roof Karkhi.

A Buzrug that night saw in a dream the robber in a state of splendour with a group of pious persons. When the Buzrug asked in his dream: "How did you attain this lofty rank?" The robber replied: "Allah Ta'ala accepted the Dua of Hadhrat Ma'roof Karkhi and forgave me."

THE SELECT DEVOTEES OF ALLAH.

Once Hadhrat Sirri Saqati (rahmatullah alayh) saw Allah Ta'ala in a dream. The Divine Voice said: "O Sirri, when I created mankind, all of them claimed to be My devoted lovers. After I created the world, then out of every ten

thousand persons, nine thousand chose the world and its pleasures, and they turned away from Me. Then I created Jannat and displayed it to the remaining 1,000. Nine hundred diverted their attention to the pursuit of Jannat. Then I created hardships and misfortunes. From the 100, ninety forgot Me because of the calamities. I said to the remaining ten: “O My Devotees! You have neither hankered after the pleasures of the world nor have you become My special devotees in the quest of the comforts of Jannat. You were not detracted from Me by the hardships and calamities.

These devotees responded: “O Creator of the Worlds! We are firm on the Pledge which we had given you.” I then responded: “O My Devotees! Whoever attaches himself to Allah, Allah attaches Himself to him.”

THE EFFECT OF DESIRE

Once Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi (rahmatullah alayh) visited his maternal uncle, Hadhrat Sirri Saqati (rahmatullah alayh) and found him extremely gloomy. When he queried the reason of his grief, Hadhrat Sirri Saqati (rahmatullah alayh) said: “I had cherished the desire for drinking cold water in a new glass for the past seven years, but I had restrained my nafs. Yesterday, this desire was so overwhelming that I bought a new glass and filled it with cold water with the intention of drinking it after completing my Thikr. While engaging in Thikr, I fell asleep and in my dream appeared a most beautiful Damsel (*Hoor*) of Jannat in wondrous splendour and stood by me. Marvelling at her exquisite beauty and splendour, I asked in wonder: “For who is all this beauty and splendour?” She curtly replied with some

annoyance in her voice: “We are not for those who gratify their desires by drinking cold water from new glasses.” So saying, she knocked over the glass of water and disappeared displaying her annoyance. My eyes opened and I saw the spilt water and the broken pieces of the glass scattered about.”

Allah Ta’ala has a special relationship with His selected Auliya. While all pious Mu’mineen are Allah’s Auliya, among these devotees are a small number of select Aarifeen who occupy exceptionally lofty ranks in the Realm of Divine Love. They are required to deny themselves even the perfectly lawful comforts and pleasures. Their example cannot be emulated by the rank and file who are drowned in nafsani pollution. These select Devotees dwell in the Gardens of Serenity which grow from the Seeds of Thikrullaah.

HONEST TRADERS

At one stage early in his life, Hadhrat Sirri Saqati (rahmatullah alayh) was a trader. His policy regarding profit was a mark-up of only 5%. He never sold his wares for more than a 5% profit mark-up, i.e. 5% gross profit. Once he purchased a large quantity of almonds for 60 dinars (gold coins). Soon after this purchase there was a steep rise in the price of almonds. A pious and honest agent approached Hadhrat Saqati and offered to purchase all the almonds. Hadhrat Saqati agreed to sell the almonds for 63 dinars since his policy was to mark up at only 5%.

The agent in surprise exclaimed: “The current wholesale market price for these almonds is 90 dinars. I shall pay you 90 dinars.” Hadhrat Saqati refused to

change his policy, and the pious agent said: “I refuse to buy below the current wholesale price.” Both clung to their respective policies without compromising. Thus, the agent left without buying the almonds and Hadhrat Saqati (rahmatullah alayh) preferred that his almonds remained unsold rather than changing his policy.

These Devotees of Allah Ta’ala come within the scope of the Hadith: “The pious, and honest trader will be with the Ambiya, Siddiqueen and Shuhada (on the Day of Qiyaamah).” Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) praising the uprighteous, honest traders, said: “The aid of Allah is with the pious traders.” “Halaal wealth is good for a Saalih (pious) man.”

These Devotees are not deflected from Allah Ta’ala by wealth. Praising them, the Qur’aan Majeed says: *“They are such men whom neither trade nor commerce diverts from the Thikr of Allah. They fear the day when the hearts and eyes of men will be upturned.”* This Qur’aanic praise applies to every pious trader who operates his trade strictly within the limits of the Shariah. The method mentioned in this Qur’aanic aayat is the very minimum incumbent observance for every Muslim. The standard for the select Devotees is infinitely higher, hence the lofty attitude of Hadhrat Sirri saqati (rahmatullah alayh).

HONOURING A SAYYID – THE TRANSFORMATION AND ELEVATION OF JUNAID BAGHDAADI

Prior to his entry into the Path of Divine Love and Proximity, Hadhrat Junaid Bagdhaadi (rahmatullah alayh) was a powerful wrestling champion in the employ

of the king. He had defeated numerous wrestlers from all parts of the world. Once a lean man who appeared physically weak came to the king and issued a challenge to wrestle with Hadhrat Junaid. The king looking at the physical state of the man said: "Junaid is a powerful wrestler while you are a handful of bones. You cannot wrestle with him." The man pleaded and said: "Do not look at my physique. The decision will be in the arena. I challenge your Junaid." Finally the king agreed. A date was fixed for a public wrestling match.

On the arranged date, thousands of people came to witness the match. When the two wrestlers met in the arena, the man whispered to Hadhrat Junaid: 'I am a member of the family of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). I am destitute with a wife and children. You can now make your choice.'

The heart of Junaid melted. Tears welled up in his eyes. The contest began. After a few minutes of combat Junaid feigned defeat and fell down. There was a hue and cry from the audience and the king was shocked. He ordered another round. The same thing happened. Again a hue and cry, and the king ordered a third round. In this round, Hadhrat Junaid dropped down totally 'defeated'. There was a tumultuous uproar and Junaid was humiliated and mocked from all sides. But in honour of the holy relationship, he chose the humiliation.

The king piled the new 'champion' with considerable wealth and gifts. He departed a wealthy man. The king summoned Junaid and sought an explanation. When Junaid explained the episode, the king was amazed, and said: "O Junaid! May everything be sacrificed for you.

For the honour of a Sayyid you preferred being disgraced and to lose everything.”

That very night, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) appeared in a dream to Junaid, and said: “Congratulations, O Junaid! You have acquitted yourself wonderfully regarding my offspring. In return, you will soon meet with me.”

In the morning Hadhrat Junaid gave away all his belongings. He donned a simple coarse garment and joined the companionship of Hadhrat Sirri Saqati (rahmatullah alayh).

WHO IS A BAKHEEL

Describing a *bakheel* (miser) Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi (rahmatullah alayh) said that a *bakheel* is one who:

- Does not feed guests
- Does not feed the beggar
- Does not feed a hungry cat or dog
- Does not feed a hungry neighbour
- Despite being able to afford new and clean garments for Jumuah and Eid, he refrains from wearing such clothes
- Does not sufficiently spend on his wife and children
- Does not give his old garments to the poor after donning new clothes
- Does not pay his Zakaat
- Does not make Qur’baani
- Does not pay Sadqah Fitr
- Does not adequately render service to his parents

- Does not fulfil the obligations of Walimah, Aqeeqah, etc.
- Does not see to the needs of his servants.

BASELESS SUSPICION

A healthy young man was asking people for assistance. Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi (rahmatullah alayh) thought: “It is improper for him to beg. He is able to work.” At night, Hadhrat Junaid saw in a dream a very large utensil in front of him. A voice commanded him to eat from the contents. When he removed the lid, he was appalled to see the dead body of the young beggar. Hadhrat Junaid said: “I do not consume dead carrion.” The voice said: “O Junaid, if you are not a consumer of carrion, then why did you today eat this person?” His eyes opened and he was in a state of shock and fear. He reflected: “Today I had thought badly about a beggar, hence I have been reprimanded in the dream.”

Hadhrat Junaid immediately made wudhu, performed two raka’ts Salaat, then set off in search of the beggar. After searching for a long while, he came to the banks of the Tigris River where he saw the beggar. The beggar said to him: “O Junaid! If you have repented for your opinion about me, then come let us shake hands. After shaking hands, the beggar said: “Go now and engross yourself in the remembrance of Allah Ta’ala.”

According to the Qur’aan Majeed, the punishment on the Day of Qiyaamah, for *gheebat* (speaking ill of others behind their backs) is the forceful consumption of dead human bodies. Thinking ill of a person is also a form of *gheebat*. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: “Gheebat is worse than zina (fornication).” If the

offending statement is true, then it is *gheebat*, and if false, it is *buhtaan* (slander) which is even worse.

MEETING MUNKAR AND NAKEER

After the demise of Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi (rahmatullah alayh), a Buzrug in a dream asked him: “How was your meeting with Munkar and Nakeer (the two Angels in the grave)?” He said: “They came and asked me: ‘Who is your Rabb!’” I laughed at them and said: “My Rabb is He Who has taken a Pledge from me in eternity. I have already answered to the King. I do not need to answer to His slaves. However, listen! Allah is He Who has created me and who has guided me.”

THE REWARD OF MERCY IS MERCY – MERCY FOR A BIRD

A man presented a caged bird to Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi (rahmatullah alayh). Hadhrat Junaid accepted the gift. The bird remained in captivity by Hadhrat Junaid for a long period. One day Hadhrat Junaid opened the door and the bird flew away. Someone asked him the reason for having set free the bird despite having kept it so long. Hadhrat Junaid said: “Today the bird spoke and said: ‘O Junaid, you derive comfort and solace in the company of your friends while I have to pine away alone in captivity.’ Hearing the plight of the bird, I set it free.”

As the bird was departing, it said: “O Junaid! As long as an animal engages in the remembrance of Allah, it will never be caught in the net of a hunter. The moment it becomes forgetful of Thikrullah it is entrapped. I was forgetful of Allah’s remembrance only once. The punishment of this forgetfulness was years of captivity in

a cage. I shiver to think of the punishment awaiting those who are forgetful of Allah for years. O Junaid, I pledge that I shall never again be forgetful of Allah Ta'ala." The bird then flew away.

The bird would occasionally return while Hadhrat would be having his meals. It would eat a few crumbs and fly away. When Hadhrat Junaid died, the bird arrived. It was overwhelmed with grief. Rolling on the ground, it too died. When the people saw this wonderful incident, they buried the bird together with Hadhrat Junaid (rahmatullah alayh).

When a mureed saw Hadhrat Junaid in a dream, he enquired of his condition. Hadhrat Junaid said: "Rabbul Izzat (The Almighty Creator) forgave me because of the pity which I had taken on the bird and setting it free."

HUMAN BEINGS – SHAITAAN'S APPRAISAL

One night in a dream Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi (rahmatullah alayh) saw Shaitaan in a complete state of nudity walking in the marketplace. Hadhrat Junaid (in his dream) said: "O accursed one! Do you not have even a vestige of shame? You wander around naked among men!" Shaitaan responded: "Hadhrat, I do have shame for men. But these creatures are not men. They are animals. In fact, they are worse than animals. Do you not remember the aayat of the Qur'aan: *'Verily, they are like animals. In fact, they are more astray (than animals).'*"

It surprises me much that you describe these people as being 'men'. Have you understood?" Hadhrat Junaid said: "Now tell me where could men be found and how are they?" Shaitaan said: "Men are like those three who

at this moment are engrossed in Thikr in Musjid Shunuziyyah. I have left no stone unturned – I employed thousands of my webs and wiles, but I failed to ensnare them. They do not even lift their heads to see which dog is barking.”

Hadhrat Junaid said: “My eyes opened. It was well past midnight. I hastened to Musjid Shunuziyyah and undoubtedly, I found three Buzrugs absorbed in Thikrullaah. Hearing my footsteps, one of them turned towards me and said: “O Junaid, Do you believe whatever that accursed being told you?”

RESTRAINING THE EVIL GAZE

A man said to Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi (rahmatullah alayh): “I am unable to restrain my eyes from lustful gazes. What should I do?” Hadhrat Junaid said: “Remember that Allah looks more at you than what you look at others (with your lustful gazing). Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: ‘Jannat-e-Adan is reserved for those who abandon a contemplated sin because they remembered Me and felt ashamed.’ ”

EFFECT OF IBAADAT AND DUA

Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi (rahmatullah alayh) said: “It is impossible for people who are the victims of their lustful carnal desires to derive the effects of Ibaadat and Dua.”

THE EFFECT OF IMAAN – A YAHUDI’S CONVERSION

One day a Yahudi was seated in a *wa’z* (lecture) session of Hadhrat Mansur Ibn Ammaar (rahmatullah alayh). The discourse was on the subject of the *Siraat* – the

Bridge over Jahannum. In Qiyaamah every person will have to pass over the *Siraat*. Those Muslims destined to enter Jannat will pass over with differing speeds depending on their deeds. The kuffaar and Muslim transgressors doomed for Jahannum will fall from the *Siraat* into Jahannum. The Fire will absorb them into its bowels.

The Yahudi asked: “Hadhrat, how is it possible that the fire will absorb and burn one person and not burn another one? How will the fire distinguish the people passing over it?” Hadhrat Mansur Ibn Ammaar said: “Undoubtedly, this will happen Allah Ta’ala is The All-Powerful One. He can demonstrate this even here on earth. Give me your qamees (shirt).” The Yahudi removed his qamees and handed it to Hadhrat Mansur who removed his own qamees as well. He then rolled the two qamees together, placing the Yahudi’s qamees within his qamees in such a manner that the Yahudi’s garment was completely covered. He asked someone to take the bundle and cast it into a furnace. A man stepped forward, took the bundle and threw it into a nearby burning furnace. Hadhrat Mansur continued his discourse.

After concluding his talk, he ordered the bundle to be retrieved from the furnace. Several people rushed to the furnace. The bundle was retrieved. There was not the slightest blemish or mark of burning on the qamees of Hadhrat Mansur. When bundle was unrolled, it was discovered that the Yahudi’s qamees which was inside had been reduced to ashes. Hadhrat Mansur commented: “My Allah is Truthful. Verily, He does not contradict His promise.” Turning to the Yahudi, he said: “Look!

Despite your gamees being inside it was burnt out while my garment remained unscathed. Similarly, on the Day of Qiyaamah when we all pass over the *Siraat*, you will burn while by the grace and mercy of Allah we shall be saved.”

This miraculous episode convinced the Yahudi of the truth of Islam. He declared his Imaan and recited: *Laa ilaha il lallaahu Muhammadur Rasulullaah*.

A GUIDE IN THE WILDERNESS

In the year 108 Hijri, a Buzrug was on a journey with a caravan. Along the journey as the caravan was passing through a desolate wilderness, the Buzrug went to answer the call of nature. After he had relieved himself he discovered that the caravan had departed and was completely out of sight. His attempts to link up with the caravan were all in vain.

The wilderness was desolate, extremely hot and fearful. He wandered aimlessly for three days and lost all hope of life. He sat down, engrossed himself in Thikrullah convinced that this wilderness would be his grave. After some time his gaze fell on a nearby hill on the opposite side. He was astonished to see a handsome young man sitting on the hill. Feeling consolation, hope returned to him. As he was viewing the scene, he fell asleep. When his eyes opened, it was evening. He saw the young man getting up and coming closer him. He stopped and struck the ground with his foot, and miraculously there gushed a fountain of sweet water. The young man drank of the water, made wudhu and stood to perform Salaat. The Buzrug also drank of the water,

made wudhu and joined the young man in Maghrib Salaat.

The young man had not spoken a word. After completing Maghrib Salaat, he got up and began walking away. The Buzrug implored: "O Blessed man! I am lost in this wilderness for several days. My caravan left me and I am wandering aimlessly in this wilderness. Show me the way." The young man looked at him and said: "Follow me." They had just walked a few steps when they saw in the darkness the caravan lamps and heard the voices of the people. The young man said: "Go, there is your caravan."

The Buzrug was ecstatic with delight. Before leaving he pleaded: "For the sake of Allah, tell me who you are." The young man said: "I am Zainul Aabideen the great grandson of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), and the son of Hadhrat Husain (radhiyallahu anhu)."

TRUE LOVE IS WITH ONLY ALLAH

Hadhrat Zainul Aabideen had a son and a daughter, both of tender age. Once his little daughter asked him: "O my beloved father, do you love my brother?" Hadhrat Zainul Aabideen: "Why not? I love him much." Hearing this, the little child began crying profusely. Hadhrat Zainul Aabideen to placate her, lifted her up and said: "I love you too dearly." The little girl increased her crying, rolled on the ground and lapsed into unconsciousness. Hadhrat Zainul Aabideen, greatly perplexed and worried, exclaimed: "O Allah! What is this?"

When she regained consciousness, she said: "O my father, once you had said that true love cannot be for anyone besides Allah. How is it possible for a man to

love Allah Ta'ala and also love others?" Hadhrat Zainul Aabideen said: "My beloved daughter, what you are saying is nothing but the truth. True love is only for Allah. Everything besides Him is insignificant."

A WALI IS APPREHENDED

There was a Kaamil Wali (A wali of a very lofty state of spiritual perfection) who enjoyed the highest degree of Divine proximity. He had many mureeds who had the ability to fly in the air. After his demise, one of his mureeds saw him in a dream. The Shaikh's face was full of gloom and misery. The astonished mureed (in the dream) shivering and fearful, asked: "Hadhrat, it is my misfortune to see you in this condition." The Shaikh replied: "When I was ushered into the Divine Presence, a heart-piercing question was put to me. Once while on earth I was sitting with my mureeds in a Thikr session. Suddenly it began raining, and in a moment of thoughtlessness, I commented: 'Today the rain is untimely.' I have been apprehended for this. Despite such a long period of time having lapsed, this question is repeatedly thrust at me from the Divine Arsh: 'When was any of My acts untimely?' "

A statement of this nature is a major sin for a Wali enjoying lofty stages of Divine proximity. These Auliya are apprehended by Allah Ta'ala for the slightest indiscretion.

THE DEGREES OF TAWAKKUL

There is no uniform standard in Tawakkul (Trust in Allah). The Tawakkul of the Auliya varies in terms of their spiritual states of elevation and nearness to Allah

Ta'ala. There was a Zaahid who had isolated himself and was living in seclusion. Daily a mureed would bring two rolls of bread for him. One day the Zaahid felt that by accepting the bread he was acting in conflict with Tawakkul. That day he refused to accept the bread and instructed the mureed to discontinue bringing bread to him. Three days passed in hunger. The Zaahid became extremely weak and in a semi-conscious state he saw in a dream/vision someone saying: "Why did you refuse acceptance of your bread?" He replied: "I did so reposing my trust on Allah Ta'ala and believing that He would arrange my rizq from His Unseen treasures." The Voice said: "Sending your rizq via the agency of a servant is also from Our Unseen treasures."

It does not behove every Saalih (pious person) to totally abandon all means of acquiring their rizq. Every Wali has a different relationship with Allah Ta'ala. Tawakkul brings trials in its wake.

ORCHARD OF THE JINN

Hadhrat Ibraahim Khawwaas (rahmatullah alayh) narrated the following wonderful episode: "Once I was with a caravan on a journey of Hajj. Along the journey, I was overwhelmed by a crave for solitude. This condition constrained me to abandon the caravan. I followed another route. I walked continuously for three days and three nights without feeling tired, hungry or thirsty.

After three days, I suddenly saw a luxurious and lush orchard. The branches of trees were overhanging with a variety of fruit. In the middle of the orchard was a fountain of crystal clear water. The exquisite beauty led me to think that perhaps this is a portion of Jannat which

Allah Ta'ala was showing me. While I was reflecting, I saw a few people approaching. They were clad in beautiful raiment. They came and stood around me. I made Salaam, and they responded. I asked them: 'Who are you and which place is this?' They said: 'We are a community of Jinn who had heard Muhammad Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) reciting the Qur'aan Majeed to us. (This fact is mentioned in Surah Jinn).'

They said: 'Today we have a difference amongst us regarding a certain mas'alah of the Shariah. We hope you could clarify it for us.' Hadhrat Ibraahim Khawwaas after listening to the mas'alah apprized them of the Shariah's ruling. Then he asked them: 'How far is this location from my caravan?' They laughed and said: 'O Ibraahim Khawwaas! Allah's activities are wonderful. Before you, only one human being had come this way. He died here and we buried him. There is his grave.'

Hadhrat Ibraahim Khawwaas went to the grave and saw the most beautiful flowers growing on the grave. On a tablet of narcissus *(checking spelling of this word)* flowers was miraculously inscribed: 'This is the Qabr of Allah's beloved devotee.' This statement was inscribed on every petal of the flowers. The Jinn then said to me: 'Your caravan is at a distance of many months from this place.' Hadhrat Khawwaas said: 'Suddenly I became drowsy and my eyes closed. When my eyes opened I found myself near to the Raudhah (Grave) of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Some flowers from the orchard of the Jinn were with me. These flowers remained with me for over a year. Their fragrance and freshness did not undergo any change. Then these

flowers miraculously disappeared from me one by one until none remained.

THE JUNGLE OF THE SNAKES

Hadhrat Haamid Aswad (rahmatullah alayh) together with his Shaikh, Hadhrat Ibraahim Khawwaas (rahmatullah alayh) were on a journey. They passed through a jungle with snakes in profusion. Seeing all the snakes, Hadhrat Haamid became fearful. He urged his Shaikh to make haste so that they could be out of these dangerous precincts before nightfall. To his astonishment, he saw Hadhrat Ibraahim spreading his bed for the night. Hadhrat Haamid was overcome with fear.

During the night snakes were all around them. Unable to contain his fear, Hadhrat Haamid complained to his Shaikh who reprimandingly instructed him not to fear, and to become engrossed in Thikr. When he commenced Thikr, he saw the snakes disappearing. Sometime thereafter he fell asleep. Suddenly his eyes opened and he saw numerous snakes around him. Full of fear, he called to his Shaikh, who again reprimanded him and ordered him to engage in Thikr. As soon as he began Thikrullaah, the snakes disappeared.

In the morning after Fajr Salaat, Hadhrat Haamid saw a huge serpent precisely at the spot where the Shaikh's musalla was. In astonishment he exclaimed: "O Shaikh! What is this!" Hadhrat Ibraahim Khawwaas said: "You desire that your name be entered into the roll of the Auliya, but you are still trapped in childhood. Do you not reflect. The entire night we were surrounded by innumerable snakes, but by the grace and mercy of Allah

we remained safe from the danger of these serpents. Can you not understand that this is the effect of Thikrullah and Tilaawat of the Qur'aan Majeed!”

IBRAAHIM'S LOFTY STANDARD OF TAWAKKUL

Once Hadhrat Ibraahim Khawwaas (rahmatullah alayh) was lost in a desolate desert wilderness. Coincidentally he met Khidhr (alayhis salaam) and joined him. As they were walking along, Hadhrat Ibraahim Khawwaas reflected: “Being in his company may corrode my Tawakkul, for I may begin to rely on him instead of on Allah Ta’ala. Such reliance will weaken my Tawakkul.” Thus, with the permission from Hadhrat Khidr (alayhis salaam), he took leave and set off alone reposing his total trust in Allah Ta’ala. The Qur’aan Majeed says: “Whoever reposes trust in Allah, verily, He suffices for that person.”

CONVERSION OF A FIRE-WORSHIPPER

Hadhrat Ibraahim Khawwaas (rahmatullah alayh) narrated: “Once I was passing through a jungle when I saw a young man approaching me. I did not pay attention to him and continued walking. He called to me: ‘May I accompany you.’ I enquired from him the religion he follows. He said that he was a fire-worshipper. I said to him: ‘You cannot go to where I am going. You cannot find this way.’ The fire-worshipper said: ‘The One who guides to the Path is Allah. He Who has guided you to the road can also guide me, if He wishes.’

Hadhrat Khawwaas said: ‘I remained silent and beckoned to him to accompany me. We walked for seven

days without having a morsel of food or a sip of water. On the eighth day he said: ‘O Shaikh! I am overwhelmed by hunger. Pray to your Allah to provide us with food.’ ” Hadhrat Khawwaas supplicated fervently to Allah Ta’ala. While he was engaging in his Dua, suddenly there appeared from the Unseen realm a cloth laden with delicious food and water. After they had completed their meals, the cloth with its contents disappeared from their sight.

“We continued our journey through the jungle for another seven days without any food or water. On the eighth day, I said to the fire-worshipper: ‘Now you display your prowess and pray for food.’ He went one side and silently prayed. To my utter astonishment I beheld the same cloth appearing with delicious food and water. I was bewildered and unable to reconcile this event. He called me to join him for meals. I refused and said that I shall not be eating. He said: ‘What, do you doubt the power of Allah Ta’ala? Do not harbour any misgivings. Let us eat. Then I shall apprise you of two goodnesses.’ ”

After they completed their meal, the young man said: “When you had requested me to display my spiritual prowess, I supplicated to Allah Ta’ala not to humiliate me in front of you. I had heard from you that Allah Ta’ala says in the Qur’aan: ‘I answer the call of the one who calls Me.’ Now impart to me the Belief of Islam and its Kalimah, and admit me into Islam.”

“Thus, the fire-worshipper formally embraced Islam. We finally reached Makkah Muazzamah. The young Saalih took up residence in Makkah. Indeed Allah Ta’ala guides whomever He wishes to guide.”

THE SOUL OF KNOWLEDGE

Hadhrat Ibraahim Khawwaas (rahmatullah alayh) said: “A man does not become an Aalim with only textual (book) knowledge. In reality, an Aalim is he whose *amal* (practical life) conforms to his *Ilm*. He practises in accordance with the precepts of the Qur’aan Majeed and follows the Sunnah of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). His prime objective and pursuit are the Pleasure of Allah Ta’ala. Such a man is a true Aalim even if his textual knowledge is minimal.”

DEPRIVATION AND HUMILIATION

Hadhrat Ibraahim Khawwaas (rahmatullah alayh) said: “A person who claims to be a repository of *Ma’rifat* of Allah, but perceives that he derives comfort from others, Allah Ta’ala will ultimately afflict him with severe trials and calamities. However, if he repents and abandons his error, Allah Ta’ala will save him from the calamities. If he does not realize and repent, Allah Ta’ala imposes greed on him, then he hankers after the wealth of others. He is then deprived from the bounties of this world and the Hereafter. The Qur’aan Majeed says: “He is a loser in this world and in the Akhirah.”

THE BALM OF THE HEART

Hadhrat Ibraahim Khawwaas (rahmatullah alayh) said: “The balm of the heart is to be found in five acts:

- In tilawat of the Qur’aan Majeed and contemplation on it.
- Abstention from satiation, i.e. not filling the stomach.

- Spending the night time in ibaadat.
- Supplicating with humility and tears to Allah Ta'ala in the morning (i.e. as Subh Saadiq appears).
- Adopting the companionship of the Saaliheen (the pious).

WRAPPED IN DIVINE LOVE

Hadhrat Shaikh Shibli (rahmatullah alayh) was perpetually absorbed by the Love of Allah Ta'ala. Whenever he saw the Name of Allah written, he would rub it on his eyes, kiss and admire it. Honouring the Name of Allah Ta'ala had become an overwhelmingly intensive passion in him. Once while he was engaged in this manner with the Name of Allah Azza Wa Jal, he heard a Voice exclaiming: "O Shibli! How long will you continue being absorbed with the love of The Name? When will you love the Divine *Zaat* (The Being of Allah)?"

On hearing this pronouncement, he became enraptured with ecstasy. He cast himself into the raging waves of the River Dajlah (Tigris River). Allah Ta'ala commanded the waves to deliver him safely to the shore. He then wandered about enwrapped in the Mantle of Divine Love until he came to a blazing furnace wherein he cast himself. The fire did not burn a single hair on his body. He emerged from the fire and wandered in a jungle where the wild beasts of prey dwelled. But the wild animals made no attempt to devour him.

Lamenting he proclaimed while wandering in the jungle: "Woe to the one whom the waters did not drown, neither the fire consumed nor the wild beasts!" In

response, he heard the Divine Voice exclaiming: “Nothing in creation can kill the Beloved of Allah, who will be killed by only Allah.”

THE INSANITY OF LOVE

When the condition of divine love of Hadhrat Shibli became intolerable for the people, they fettered him with chains. When the chains served no purpose, he was imprisoned. Once when he heard some people saying that he was mad, he replied: “On the Day of Qiyaamah it will be revealed who is mad – I or you.”

Once while in the prison some well-wishers visited him. He asked: “Who are you?” They said: “Your followers and well-wishers.” Hadhrat Shibli picked up stones and began pelting them. They all ran away. He commented: “You are my friends, but you flee from me!”

THE INTOXICATION OF DIVINE LOVE

Once while Hadhrat Shibli (rahmatullah alayh) was engrossed with the Thikr of ‘Allaahu-Allaah’, a Durwaish passing by said to him: “If you make thikr of *Laa ilaha il lallaah*, it will be most appropriate.” Hadhrat Shibli let out a fearful scream and said: “I fear that my soul will depart on the word, *Laa*.” In other words, his perception of the shortness of life was so vivid that he felt his soul would depart at any moment. He could not tolerate that his soul departs while he says ‘Laa’, i.e. ‘there is no deity’.

When the Durwaish heard this comment, he too let out a screech and he dropped dead. The news of this episode spread swiftly. The relatives of the dead

Durwaish arrived. They arrested Hadhrat Shibli and took him to the king and accused him of having killed the Durwaish. When the king questioned Hadhrat Shibli, he ecstatically recited poetry of Divine Love. The king hastily ordered his men: “Take away this man intoxicated with Divine Love. A queer state is affecting me. I fear that if I listen to him for a few more moments, I shall collapse and fall from my throne.”

EXTINGUISHING THE LAMP OF MA'RIFAT

Offering admonition to the Auliya in particular, Hadhrat Shibli (rahmatullah alayh) said that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) warned against satiation (i.e. filling the stomach with food). Satiation extinguishes the lamp of the Noor of Ma'rifat in the heart.”

HADHRAT UMAR AND HIS NAFS

Heracleus, the Roman emperor, sent some gifts to Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu). Of the four items he sent, one was an exquisite golden casket filled with diamonds. The second item was a stunningly beautiful slave girl dressed in the most beautiful garments with jewels. The third item was a bottle of such perfume which was priceless. Only kings and emperors could afford it. The fourth item was a bottle of such lethal poison, the odour of which was sufficient to kill a person.

When the emperor's representative arrived in Madinah Munawwarah in great style and pomp, the inhabitants were intrigued. He asked the people to direct him to the palace of the Muslim Emperor, Ameerul Mu'mineen Umar. The people said that their Ameerul Mu'mineen had neither palace nor fortress. At that time

he was in the Musjid in all probability taking a nap because during the night time he would tour the streets taking care of the citizens.

The emperor's representative was extremely astonished to learn that the king whose name sent shudders down the spines of emperors and kings was sleeping in the Musjid, had neither palace nor fortress, and would walk the streets guarding the citizens. He went to Musjid-e-Nabawi where he found a man sleeping in the sand.

There were no carpets in the Musjid. It was a date-palm structure with a sand floor. The Christian was dumbfounded. He stared in bewilderment at the sleeping Ameerul Mu'mineen. His garments and the covering sheet were full of patches and he was sleeping on the sand. He had no weapons. Only a whip was at his side. But the face of Hadhrat Umar was so awe-inspiring that the Christian began to shiver uncontrollably.

While the emperor's man was riveted in the place where he stood, Hadhrat Umar's eyes opened. Seeing the stranger in gaudy apparel shivering, he exclaimed: "Don't fear! Don't fear!" On Hadhrat Umar's enquiring, the Christian explained who he was and the purpose of his mission. Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) said: "Let me see the gifts." The Christian first presented the golden casket filled with diamonds. Hadhrat Umar opened and admired it. Then he handed it to a Sahaabi with the instruction to deposit it into the Baitul Maal (Public Treasury). Then he said: "What else have you brought?" The emperor's man called the girl who was waiting outside dressed in splendid garments and jewellery. He instructed that she remove her Niqaab (face-covering).

When Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) saw her stunning beauty, he exclaimed: “Glory to Allah Who is the Creator of the most beautiful appearances.” This is an aayat in Surah Al-Mu’minoon. Accepting the gift, he looked around the Musjid and saw a slave. He called the slave and asked: “Do you prefer this girl?” The slave in delight exclaimed: “Undoubtedly, I love her.” Hadhrat Umar presented her as a gift to the slave.

He asked: “What else have you brought?” The Christian presented the bottle of perfume and extolled its wondrous virtue. Hadhrat Umar said: “The Musjid is most deserving of it.” He opened the bottle and emptied the contents all over the Musjid. The Christian was stunned by the behaviour of Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu). Here was a mighty conqueror, emperor and ruler, yet he had no desire for worldly possessions. He simply eliminated whatever was given to him.

Lastly the representative presented the bottle of poison explaining its lethal effect, and that it was a wonderful protection against enemies. Just one whiff and a man would be killed. Hadhrat Umar said: “I have no enemies except one great enemy, that is my evil nafs which needs to be killed. So saying, he took the bottle, recited *Bismillaahir Rahmaanir raheem*, and with one gulp drank the entire contents of the bottle. The Christians as well as the Sahaabah who were present were shocked. What will now happen? Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) perspired profusely. His garments were drenched with perspiration. But besides this, there was no detrimental effect whatsoever on him. This was Ameerul Mu’mineen Sayyiduna Umar Bin Khattaab (radhiyallahu anhu). Even Shaitaan would not walk in the

same street when he would see Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) approaching. And about him, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "If a Nabi had to come after me, it would have been Umar."

HADHRAT UMAR AND THE RIVER NILE

After the conquest of Egypt, Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) appointed Hadhrat Amr Ibnul Aa's (radhiyallahu anhu) as the governor. He was informed that the River Nile had dried up. On making enquiries, he learnt that the drying up of the River Nile was an annual event. The people would sacrifice a beautiful young woman to propitiate the river. It was their belief that the resumption of the river's flow was the effect of the sacrifice. Hadhrat Amr prohibited this evil and cruel practice, and he sent a report to Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) on this issue. Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) wrote two letters: one for Hadhrat Amr (radhiyallahu anhu), and one for the River Nile. Addressing the River, he commanded it to resume its flow in the Name of Allah Ta'ala. In the second letter, he instructed Hadhrat Amr (radhiyallahu anhu) to deposit the Nile's letter in the middle of the dry river-bed.

When the letters reached him, Hadhrat Amr (radhiyallahu anhu) executed the order. Within a few hours the flow of the water resumed, and the level of the water was never before seen to be so high as it was on this occasion. From that day to the present, the Nile never dried up again, and for all time the evil and brutal practice of the murder-ritual of sacrificing a young woman was eradicated.

While this episode is wonderful to minds grounded in materialism, it is perfectly normal and logical in terms of Islamic Belief and reality. How could it be logical and intelligent to address the river which is an inanimate, unintelligent object? Our concepts of Animation and Intelligence are defective. While we restrict animation and intelligence to the animal kingdom, the Qur'aan and Ahaadith confirm these attributes for every aspect and atom of Allah's creation. There is not a speck in creation, irrespective of its classification, whether it is the plant kingdom or the stone kingdom, which is lacking in animation and intelligence. While the animation, and intelligence of Insaan, Malaaiakah and Jinn are of superior kinds relative to these attributes of the lower forms of creation, it is folly and false to deny animation and intelligence to the plant and stone kingdoms.

In fact, the animation, if not the intelligence, of the plant kingdom is perceptible to man. We observe with our naked eyes the growth and the withering – the birth and death – of plants. The imperceptibility to the human mind and eye of these attributes in the stone kingdom – rocks, stones, sand, etc. – by the senses of the human being – is not grounds for denying the existence of animation and intelligence in the stone kingdom.

There is copious evidence in the Qur'aan and Hadith declaring and confirming the existence of animation and intelligence in all aspects of Allah's creation. The Qur'aan Majeed states: "The seven heavens, the earth and whatever is therein recite the tasbeeh (glorification) of Allah. And, there is not a thing (in Allah's creation) which does not recite the Hamd (Praise) of Allah. But, you (O man!) do not understand their tasbeeh."

Denying reality, especially transcendental and celestial realities on the basis of ignorance, is stupendous ignorance which is the product of intellectual and spiritual derangement. This derangement in Islamic terminology is known as kufr, and the subscriber to the doctrine of kufr is called kaafir (plural kuffaar). There are many similar verses in the Qur'aan Majeed, and innumerable Hadith narrations which inform of the existence of animation and intelligence in objects which are known to man as inanimate. The crying and speaking of stones, pillars, etc., and the speech of wild beasts (speaking in human language), such as the Hud Hud and Ants mentioned in the Qur'aan and Hadith, confirm this reality. Since such events appear to man as being beyond the parameters of 'natural' laws as they understand nature, these supernatural occurrences are termed Mu'jizaat and Karaamaat (Miracles of the Ambiya and Auliya respectively).

But, everything in Allah's creation is perfectly normal functioning harmoniously in accordance with a grandiose system with fixed laws, all operating with the Command and Direct Intervention of Allah Azza Wa Jal. Not an atom moves and not a leaf on a tree changes direction in the breeze without the Command and Direct Intervention of Allah, The All-Powerful, All-Wise Sovereign of Creation, Whose creation consists of billions, trillions and inconceivable trillions of universes which in turn are infinitesimal specks and dots relative to His creative power. Thus, Hadhrat Umar's command to the River Nile was addressed to an animate and intelligent object. "And Allah has power over all things" – Qur'aan

These realities are de-mystified and unravelled to the mind of Insaan proportionate to the degree of his Ma'rifat of Allah Azza Wa Jal. As for the those who are trapped in the bowels and dregs of materialism and kufr due to the corrosion and fossilization of their spiritual hearts, they have developed spiritual in-animation and ignorance as opposed to intelligence, hence these celestial and transcendental truths are beyond their intellectual grasp and physical senses. In the words of the Qur'aan Majeed:

"Verily, they are like (the lowly) animals or even worse."

IMPORTANCE OF SALAAT

On the occasion of Hadhrat Umar's assassination by the fire-worshipper, Lu'Lu', he (Hadhrat Umar) had just commenced the Takbeer of Fajr Salaat when the evil mushrik plunged his poisonous dagger several times into the body of Ameerul Mu'mineen. As he was about to lapse into unconsciousness, he indicate to Hadhrat Abdur Rahmaan Bin Auf to lead the Salaat. He then lost consciousness.

Hadhrat Abdur Rahmaan (radhiyallahu anhu) shortened the Salaat by reciting Surah Asr and Surah Kauthar. After Salaat, the Sahaabah carried Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) to his home. When his eyes opened, the first question he asked: "Did the people perform Salaat?" The Sahaabah replied: "Yes, they have performed Salaat." Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu), satisfied, said: "Alhamdulillah! There is no Islam for him who abandons Salaat."

Despite his rapidly deteriorating condition and extreme weakness, Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu)

made Wudhu and performed Fajr Salaat. After Salaat, he enquired: “O People! Who is my assassin?” He was told: “It is Lu’lu’ the Majusi (fire-worshipper) slave.” Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu), profusely thanked Allah Ta’ala and expressed his gratitude that his assassin was not a Muslim.

(End of Bustaanul Auliya)

A LION BECOMES THE GUIDE

The Sahaabi, Hadhrat Safeenah (radhiyallahu anhu) who had been taken captive by the Christian army, had managed to escape. His flight took him through a dense jungle where he lost the way. Suddenly there appeared a lion. Addressing the lion, Hadhrat Safeenah said: “I am the slave of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). I have lost the way and I have to link up with the Muslim army.”

The lion, like an obedient dog, wagged its tail and began walking with Hadhrat Safeenah (radhiyallahu anhu). Whenever the lion sensed danger ahead, he would run forward, ascertain the situation, then return to accompany Hadhrat Safeenah. The lion remained with him until the Muslim army was in sight. Then the lion departed and disappeared into the jungle.

(Barkaatus Saaliheen)

A HAWAARI OF NABI ISAA (ALAYHIS SALAAM) MEETS THE SAHAABAH OF RASULULLAH (SALLALLAHU ALAYHI WASALLAM)

During the Khilaafat (Reign) of Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu), the army of Islam reached Mt. Halwaan in Iraq and it was Asr time. The Muath-thin proclaimed the Athaan. When the Muath-thin recited: *“Allaahu Akbar!”*, a voice from within the mountain responded: *“La qad kab barta kabeeran”* (Verily, you have proclaimed a mighty Takbeer). When the Muath-thin recited: *“Ash-hadunna Muhammadar Rasulullaah”*, the voice responded: *“He is the Nabi about whom Hadhrat Isaa (alayhis salaam) delivered to us glad tidings.”*

The Voice responded to every statement of the Muath-thin. At the ending of the Athaan, the Sahaabah addressed the Voice of the unseen being, and said: “O being! May the mercy of Allah be on you. Are you an Angel or a Jinn or some other slave of Allah? You have transmitted your voice to us. Now reveal yourself. We are the Sahaabah of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and the army of Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu).”

Suddenly, the mountain split, and in the same way as the miraculous Camel of Nabi Saalih (alayhis salaam) had emerged from the mountain which had split open, there emerged from Mount Halwaan, an extremely old man. He made Salaam and said: “I am from the tribe of Bin Barthamla (a tribe of Bani Israaeel) and a Companion of Hadhrat Isaa (alayhis salaam). He had ordered me to take up residence in this mountain. He had

made Dua to Allah Ta'ala to grant me life until he descends from the heaven. Convey my Salaams to Umar Ibn Khattaab.” He then promptly disappeared into thin air. Despite numerous searches undertaken, the Sahaabah never were able to locate him. Allah’s Qudrat and mysteries are indeed marvellous. That Sahaabi of Hadhrat Isaa (alayhis salaam) is today well over 2000 years old and will join Hadhrat Isaa (alayhis salaam) when he appears on earth.

HADHRAT UMAR’S JUSTICE

Once during the Khilaafat of Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu), several tremors shook Madinah Munawwarah. While the shaking was taking place, Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) struck his whip on the earth and exclaimed: “Halt! Am I not administering justice on you?” Immediately the tremors ceased.

THE EFFECT OF JUSTICE

Hadhrat Umar Bin Abdul Azeez (rahmatullah alayh), the renowned Khalifah of Bani Ummayyah, was famed for his piety and justice. He had restored the Khilaafat to the model of Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu), the Second Khalifah of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). During the Khilaafat of Hadhrat Umar Bin Abdul Azeez (rahmatullah alayh), the effect of his profound justice and piety extended even over the wild beasts. Shepherds reported that wolves would wander among their grazing sheep. Neither did the sheep fear the wolves, nor would the latter attack the sheep.

One day a shepherd, Musa Bin A’yan who used to graze his flock of sheep in the fields of the city of

Kirmaan, observed a wolf suddenly attack one of the sheep. He immediately understood from this incident that the Khalifah, Hadhrat Umar Bin Abdul Azeez (rahmatullah alayh) had died. On making enquiries he learnt that the Khalifah had died the very same day the wolf had attacked the sheep.

THE CAPTIVITY OF HADHRAT SAEED BIN JUBAIR

The notorious tyrant Hajjaaj Bin Yuisuf of Iraq sent his police to arrest Hadhrat Saeed Bin Jubair (rahmatullah alayh). By this time the tyrant had already slaughtered 120,000 Muslims among whom were numerous Sahaabah. Hadhrat Saeed was taken into custody from Makkah Muakarramah. Along the journey to Iraq, at nightfall, the party halted for the night at a place in close proximity to a Christian church. The priest from the church came out and warned them of a lion and lioness which roamed around the precincts late at night. He proposed that they spend the night in the church. While the policemen happily accepted the offer, Hadhrat Saeed (rahmatullah alayh) said: "I shall not seek refuge in the premises of the kuffaar. Allah suffices for me."

Late at night while Hadhrat Saeed Bin Jubair was engaging in Salaat, the lioness appeared and stood nearby observing the scene. When Hadhrat Saeed went into Sajdah, the lioness gently licked his feet. Soon the male lion appeared and stood nearby as if on guard. Meanwhile the Christian priest was struck by wonder viewing this miraculous scene. The policemen too were astonished. The priest embraced Islam. Although the policemen expressed their profound regret, they were

overwhelmed by the fear of Hajjaaj. Finally they delivered Hadhrat Saeed Bin Jubair to Hajjaaj.

After a lengthy interrogation and fearless response by Hadhrat Saeed Bin Jubair (rahmatullah alayh), he was put to death. Just prior to his death, Hadhrat Jubair supplicated to Allah Ta'ala: "O Allah! After me, do not allow Hajjaaj power to kill anyone." This Dua was accepted. For as long as Hajjaaj lived thereafter, he was unable to kill anyone. He died in great agony. After the murder of Hadhrat Saeed, Hajjaaj lamented that every night when he wanted to sleep, an apparition of Hadhrat Saeed Bin Jubair (rahmatullah alayh) would appear and violently tug his legs. Thus perished the tyrant suffering and deranged by fear.

THE CALAMITY OF COMPLAINT

Shaikh Abdullah Bin Ubaid Abadaani (rahmatullah alayh) narrated the following interesting episode:

"Once I performed Isha' Salaat with Jamaa't in the Musjid of the City of Abadaan. In the first saff (row) I saw three strangers. After Salaat, the three strangers left the Musjid and walked towards the sea. I followed them. When they reached the shore, a bridge of silver threads suddenly appeared, and they walked on it to cross. I attempted to follow, but as soon as I set my foot on the bridge, it disappeared. I remained standing on the shore gazing at the three strangers disappearing over the sea.

I again saw the three strangers after Fajr Salaat the next morning. I again followed them. The same miraculous episode of the previous night was enacted. I again remained standing on the shore. The bridge had again disappeared the moment I set my foot on it. I

reprimanded myself and said: ‘O Nafs! There is corruption in you, hence you could not accompany them.’ On the third day, the three strangers again were present in the Musjid. After Salaat, I followed them to the sea. On this occasion, one of them grabbed my hand, and I too crossed the sea along with them.

When we reached the other side, four other strangers joined us. Suddenly there appeared a cloth from the heaven. On it were eight freshly fried fish. Obviously the eighth one was for me. We sat together and began eating. While eating, I commented: ‘It would be better if there was some salt.’ One of these Auliya, heaved a heavy sigh and said: ‘You are among those people who instead of shukr (gratitude), criticize and utter statements of ingratitude. You cannot accompany us. One of them held my hand and miraculously I was on the road in the city. Thereafter I never again saw them.”

DIVINE AID FOR A PROCLAIMER OF THE HAQQ

During the Khilaafat of Haroon Rashid there was a young Aalim who was extreme in Amr Bil Ma’roof Nahy Anil Munkar (Commanding righteousness and prohibiting evil). His attitude was determined by the Hadith of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam): “Never permit the fear of people to prevent you from proclaiming the Haqq when you are aware of it.”

Regardless of who the wrongdoer was, this young Aalim would not be deterred from admonishing him, be the transgressor the ruler. One day in his *wa’z* (lecture) he severely criticized and admonished the Khalifah Haroon Rashid. The Khalifah was greatly offended and

angry. He ordered the young man to be imprisoned in a windowless dungeon. After enclosing him in the dungeon, even the door was sealed. The plan was that the young man should perish in great suffering.

Someone reported to the Khalifah that the young Aalim was seen walking in a certain orchard. Haroon Rashid had him apprehended and brought to him. The Khalifah asked: "Who released you?" The Aalim: "The One who admitted me to the orchard." The Khalifah: "Who admitted you to the orchard?" The Aalim: "The One who released me from the prison." The Khalifah said: "This is wonderful." The Aalim: "Which act of your Rabb is not wonderful?"

Haroon Rashid was overcome with remorse. He sobbed profusely. He presented many gifts to the young Aalim and ordered that he be mounted on a royal horse and be honourably paraded through the streets with a proclaimer announcing: "Allah has honoured this servant. Haroon Rashid wanted to humiliate him, but he was constrained to honour him."

HADHRAT SAHL AND THE BEAR

It was the permanent practice of Hadhrat Sahl Bin Abdullah (rahmatullah alayh) to make a fresh Wudhu for every Salaat. One day he was in a jungle where water was not available. Suddenly he saw a bear approaching him. The bear was walking on its hind legs and carrying a container with its front paws. The bear placed the container in front of him. He asked the bear: "From whence did this container come?" The bear responded: "We wild animals are among the Ahlullaah (People of Allah). Divine Love and Trust have constrained us to

sever ties with human beings. Today while we were in discussion, a Voice commanded: ‘Sahl is in search of water for wudhu.’ I immediately grabbed this utensil. Two Angels arrived and filled it with water.”

Hadhrat Sahl became drowsy and fell asleep. When his eyes opened, the bear had disappeared. He lamented: “Alas! I would have gained more information from the bear if I had not fallen asleep.” I made wudhu with the water. But when I attempted to drink from it, a Voice, exclaimed: “O Suhail! The time for drinking this water has not yet arrived for you.” Suddenly the container disappeared.

HADHRAT SAHL’S WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE

Hadhrat Sahl (rahmatullah alayh) narrated the following wonderful episode:

“One Jumuah day I was in the Musjid in the first saff (row). When the Imaam ascended the Mimbar to deliver the Khutbah, I developed an intense need for urinating, and was unable to restrain myself. I was in a dilemma. If I leave the Musjid, I shall be inconveniencing the musallis. I shall have to climb over their shoulders to get out which is forbidden in the Shariah. If I remain, my Salaat will be ruined as I was unable to restrain the urine any longer.

While I was trapped in this dilemma, the musalli sitting next to me, said: ‘Are you in need of urinating?’ When I said, ‘Yes’, he removed his shawl and cast it over me and instructed: ‘Go, quickly and come back! As he spoke, my eyes closed. When my eyes opened, I found myself outside a palatial house. A man standing at the

large entrance told me to come inside. When I entered, I found it to be a veritable palace. On one side there was a container of deliciously sweet water and a miswaak. Nearby were toilet facilities.

After relieving myself, I made wudhu. A Voice called, saying: ‘When you have completed, announce so.’ After completing wudhu, I exclaimed: ‘Yes!’ Simultaneously, the man removed his shawl from me, and I found myself sitting in exactly the same spot in the Musjid. I was stunned and bewildered. After Salaat, I followed the man. When he saw me, he said: ‘Are you doubting what had happened? Do you think that it was a dream or imagination?’ I said: ‘Truly, it is incredible.’ As I said so, suddenly I saw the same palatial house in front of me. He welcomed me inside. When I entered, I found it to be the very same palace where I had relieved myself and made wudhu. I exclaimed: ‘Now I am assured of the reality.’ The man said: ‘O Sahl! He who obeys Allah, everything obeys him. O Sahl! Search for Him, you will find Him.’

My eyes welled up with tears. While wiping the tears my eyes momentarily closed. As I opened my eyes, neither was that Buzrug there nor the palace. I was standing alone.”

TAUHEED SAVES A KING

A tyrannical king in bygone times was captured in war. His captives enclosed him in a large urn and lit a fire under it to roast him alive. The king shocked with fear and horror, called out and prayed inside the pot to his idols. There was no answer to his desperate cries and prayers. When he lost all hope, a window of guidance

opened up in his heart, and he called the One Creator, Allah Ta'ala. He called to Allah Ta'ala to save him.

Allah Ta'ala ordered the rain and the wind to go to his aid. A torrent of rain extinguished the fire and cooled the urn. The strong gust of wind uplifted the urn and deposited in a distant land. When the intrigued inhabitants opened the urn they were astounded to see a man inside. The king explained his story. All the inhabitants of the region, who were idolaters, abandoned their false religion and accepted the belief of the Oneness of Allah Ta'ala.

THE CONSEQUENCE OF ABUSING AMAANAT

A Saalih (pious) Aalim narrating his experience, said: "There were two Buzrugs in the City of Maseesah. The two had pledged to refrain from eating anything prepared by the people. I asked them for permission to accompany them. They said that I could accompany them on condition that I too made the same pledge. I agreed.

I went with them. We came to a mountain where there was a cave. They instructed me to remain inside the cave and to engage in ibaadat while they climbed the mountain. I lived in the cave for many days. Daily they would bring food for me. One day it occurred to me that I was wasting my time in the cave. How long will I have to live in the cave? I should go to the City of Tartus, earn my living and teach the Qur'aan Shareef. I then left the cave and settled in Tartus.

One year later, I one day suddenly saw one of the two Buzrugs standing next to me. He said: 'You have violated your pledge. If you had not done so, you would

also have been bestowed with the gifts we have received.’ I asked: ‘What have you received?’ He said: ‘We received three things: (1) With one step we can traverse from east to west. (2) We walk on the surface of water (3) We can become invisible at will.’

As he said this, he disappeared from my sight. I called and pleaded in the Name of Allah Ta’ala that he should become visible. Again he appeared, and I asked: ‘Can I repeat the performance (i.e. live in the cave)?’ He said: ‘An Amaanat (Trust) is not assigned to a man who commits khiyaanat (violates his pledge).’ He promptly disappeared.”

DATES AND THORNS

Once a Buzrug walking in the wilderness saw a man picking dates from a thorn tree. He was eating the dates as he picked. The Buzrug made Salaam. The man responded and told the Buzrug to join him. However, every date the Buzrug picked from the thorn tree became a thorn in his hand. The man looking at the Buzrug said: “If you are obedient to Allah Ta’ala in seclusion, He will feed you with dates in the wilderness.”

THE POVERTY OF THE AULIYA

Hadhrat Saeed Yahya Basri (rahmatullah alayh) once visited Shaikh Abdul Waahid Ibn Zaid (rahmatullah alayh). He found the Shaikh in an extreme state of poverty and want, hence he said: “If you make dua to Allah Ta’ala for increase in rizq, I am sure your dua will be accepted.” Shaikh Abdul Waahid said: “Allah is well aware of the conditions of His slaves.” He then picked up a handful of pebbles which turned into gold in his hands.

He flung the gold towards me, saying: "Go, take it and fulfil your needs. Whatever on earth is beneficial for the Aakhirah, only that is good."

The poverty of the Auliya is not the consequence of any inability to earn. Their poverty is self-imposed and is in emulation of the poverty of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) who said: "Poverty is my pride."

THE VIRTUE OF DUROOD SHAREEF

Once a Buzrug went to a well to draw water for wudhu. There was no bucket and rope. While he stood there, a young girl from the nearby village appeared and spat in the well. The water immediately rose to the brim of the well. The Shaikh made wudhu. After performing Zuhr Salaat, he went to the village and located the girl. He asked her: "How did you acquire this treasure?" She replied: "By reciting Durood Shareef in abundance."

A CHRISTIAN EMBRACES ISLAM

Once Hadhrat Abu Ja'far (rahmatullah alayh) was in a boat with some other passengers. The boat was proceeding from Basrah to Baghdad. There was also a Christian passenger who would not eat anything. When Hadhrat Abu Ja'far enquired from him the reason for not eating, he said: "I trust in God. I eat only when He sends." Hadhrat Abu Ja'far said: "I too trust in Allah. When we disembark, let us continue our journey on foot." The Christian agreed.

The two walked the entire day. During the evening they reached a village. A black dog appeared with bread in its mouth. It dropped the bread by the Christian who promptly ate it without any reference to his companion,

Hadhrat Abu Ja'far. In the morning they resumed their journey and walked until the evening. As they approached a village, the same black dog appeared with bread in its mouth. It left the bread by the Christian who ate it without saying a word to Hadhrat Abu Ja'far. The next morning they again set off on the journey. Towards the end of the day, the same dog appeared with bread. The Christian again ate it without saying anything.

On the fourth day after Fajr Salaat, they resumed their journey. In the evening they reached near to a village. The sun had just set. Hadhrat Abu Ja'far recited the Athaan and as he began Maghrib Salaat, a man with a tray of food and water appeared. When the Salaat was completed, the stranger presented the tray of food to Hadhrat Abu Ja'far who indicated to the man to give it to the Christian. This was done. Hadhrat Abu Ja'far continued making Salaat.

After the Salaat, the Christian carrying the tray came to Hadhrat Abu Ja'far and said: "Convert me to Islam." Abu Ja'far: "Why?" Christian: "I have now realized that your Deen is the Truth. I have seen that my food was brought by a dog like myself while your food was delivered to you by a human being like yourself. Further, I would eat my bread without thinking of you. But when your food came, then despite four days of hunger, you thought first of me. I am convinced of the truth of Islam after seeing Islamic morality."

THE FLYING OF AN AARIFAH

Shaikh Abdul Waahid Bin Zaid (rahmatullah alayh) narrates: "I set off with the intention to journey to Baitul Maqdis. Along the journey I lost the road in the desert.

While searching for the road, a lady with a little girl appeared. I asked: ‘Have you also lost the road?’ She said: ‘The one who has recognized Allah is not a traveller. How can a lover of Allah stray from the Path? Place your hand on the head of my daughter and walk ahead of me.’

I complied. We took only seven steps and I saw Musjidul Aqsa in front of me. I was astonished and began rubbing my eyes, for perhaps I was imagining. The lady understood my perplexity and said: ‘Your walking is the walking of the Zaahideen while my speed is the speed of the Aarifeen. The Zaahid walks while the Aarif flies. How can one who walks be equal to one who flies?’ She promptly disappeared into thin air.”

THE IBAADAT OF A SAYYID

There was a Sayyid who was living in a hut near to the sea. His condition was indeed wonderful. During the fifteen years he lived in the hut, he did not even take a rest. He was perpetually engrossed in ibaadat. Once he had made wudhu only one time in 12 days. With one Wudhu he had performed Salaat for 12 days. He would not eat anything for several days on end, and when he would eat, it would be something very dry, like stale dry bread.

Once, after returning from the city where he had gone to perform Eidul Fitr Salaat, he found a man performing Salaat in his hut. Standing outside, he thought: “He must be a musaafir. What shall I feed him?” The Sayyid did not have any food to serve to the stranger. As he was thinking, the stranger from inside the hut said: “Don’t worry about food. Only bring some water.” The Sayyid

brought water, and when he entered he saw the stranger had placed warm bread and almond halwa (a sweetdish). The bread appeared to have been just taken from an oven. The Sayyid was astonished. Understanding my astonishment, the stranger said: "There is no need for surprise. There are such servants of Allah, who obtain whatever they desire.' Both sat down to eat. After meals, the stranger suddenly disappeared.

O Reader! There is no need to wonder at the Sayyid who had not slept for 15 years and who would perform the Salaat of many days with a single wudhu. Allah's Qudrat (Power) is great and wonderful. The Thikrullaah and the Divine Love of the Auliya sustain even their physical bodies just as Tasbeeh sustain the Malaaiakah. The dominance of Roohaaniyat (spirituality) imbues the Auliya with these abilities. Their souls gain greater power and domination over their physical bodies. Tasbeeh, Muraaqabah, Muhasabah and Divine Love sustain the Arwaah (Souls) and bodies of the Devotees of Allah who have annihilated their nafs and their very being in the Flames of His Love. Time and space have no relevance in the spiritual and celestial spheres. Therefore, O Reader! Wonder not with doubt in the Divine Mysteries which are unfathomable to your heart mired in crass materialism. But wonder with admiration and awe and yearn for Divine Proximity, and say: 'I love the Saaliheen although I am not of them. Perhaps my Rabb will bestow to me rectitude.'

RASULULLAH (SALLALLAHU ALAYHI WASALLAM) SENDS A GIFT

A Buzrug, set off on a journey with the intention of meeting the Ahlullah (pious servants of Allah Ta'ala) of Iraq. Along the journey, at one stage he was extremely tired. Just before entering a city, he came to a dilapidated house. He went inside and fell asleep. While sleeping he heard in a dream someone saying: "Under the wall near to you is buried a sum of money. The money is not owned by anyone. Remove it and use it for yourself."

The Buzrug woke up and began digging at the base of the wall. After digging a few minutes, he retrieved a bag with 500 dirhams. He resumed his journey. The whole day a variety of thoughts crossed his mind regarding the money. He desired to spend it in the Path of Allah Ta'ala. That night after Isha Salaat, in a dream Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said to him: "A Faqeer and the wealth of the world cannot coexist. Go to a certain Musjid in Baghdad. Abul Abbaas lives there. Give all the money to him."

The Buzrug's eyes opened. He immediately set off for Bagdad where he reached after seven days. When he located the Musjid and found Abul Abbaas, he handed him the bag of money and narrated the episode of the money and his dream. Abul Abbaas said: "For the past seven days we had no food to eat. I am also in debt. The creditors are making vigorous demands on me. Now Allah Rabbul Izzat has sent this gift with you."

THE MYSTERY OF IBRAAHIM KIRMAANI

A Buzrug narrated the following wonderful episode:

“Together with a few of my companions we went to Mount Libnaan with the intention of meeting Auliya who inhabit isolated places and caves. We walked for a considerable time in the mountain range. I injured my leg and sat down to rest. My companions decided to proceed with the search for Auliya. They told me to remain here while they searched. They would return again. I waited until the next day but they did not return. I hobbled along in search of water to make wudhu. I descended the side of the mountain and found a fountain of water. After making wudhu as I was about to commence Salaat, I heard a voice reciting the Qur’aan Shareef.

I completed Salaat and set off in the direction of the voice. Soon I saw a cave. The voice was emanating from that cave. When I entered I saw a blind Buzrug sitting. I made Salaam, and he responded: ‘Wa Alaikum Salaam’, and asked me: ‘Are you a jinn or an insaan (human being).’ I said: ‘I am an insaan.’ With surprise in his voice, he said: ‘This is the first time in thirty years that a human being has come here. Perhaps you are tired. Take a rest.’ As he said so, I fell asleep. He aroused me at the time of Zuhr, and I joined him for Zuhr Salaat. I also performed Asr, Maghrib and Isha’ with him. Despite him being blind, he was accurate in determining the times of Salaat. After Isha’ Salaat he said to me: ‘Go, into the inner-side of the cave and eat whatever you find there.’ When I reached another section inside the cave, I saw on a slab of stone walnuts, raisins, apples, figs, etc. I ate as much as I desired. I asked him: ‘From whence did all these fruits come to you?’ He said: ‘You shall soon see for yourself.’

Soon thereafter, a beautiful multi-coloured bird arrived. Its wings were snow white; breast red and neck green. In its beak were raisins and in its claws walnuts. The bird deposited the fruit on the slab of stone. The Buzrug said: ‘This bird has been delivering these fruits for me since the past 30 years. It comes daily seven times. But today it had come 15 times. When I asked the bird the reason, it said that seven times were for me, and eight times for the guest.’

The garment of the Buzrug was made of the bark of a tree. A bark of the tree was also his bedding. I asked him: ‘Where did you obtain the bark from?’ He said: ‘This same bird on the Day of Ashura (10th Muharram) every year brings ten pieces of bark which I make into garments.’

The Buzrug had a wonderful stone in which there was a slight hollow forming a sort of a dish. Water poured into this stone would serve the purpose of removing hairs. By rubbing the water, hairs of the body would be removed.

I stayed with the Buzrug for 24 days. One day seven beings visited him. They all had fiery red eyes. There only garments were dense layers of hair which covered their entire bodies. The Buzrug said to me: ‘Don’t fear. They are Muslim jinn.’ One jinn recited Surah Taha; one recited Surah Furqaan, and one recited some verses of Surah Rahmaan. It appeared that they came to learn Qiraa’t of the Qur’aan from the Buzrug.

On the 24th day the Buzrug asked me to explain my story. How I happened to come here. After I explained the circumstances of my arrival. He commented: ‘If I had known, I would not have permitted you to stay so long.’

Your companions must be anxious and worried about you. It is best that you depart now.’ I told him that I was not aware of the road back. He said: ‘Come, I shall show you.’ While walking with him, I requested him for some naseehat. He said: ‘I shall give you two naseehat: (1) Learn respect. (2) Adopt hunger. You will then be enumerated among the Auliya.’ Then he said: ‘On the occasion of Hajj you will meet a man (he described the man to me). On the Day of Tawaaf-e-Ziyaarat, he will be between Maqaam-e-Ibraahim and the Zam Zam Well. Convey my Salaam to him. Tell him that Ibraahim Kirmaani sends his Salaam.’

When we came out of the cave, a wild beast was waiting there. Ibraahim Kirmaani said something to the animal which I did not understand. Then he instructed me: ‘Go, accompany this animal. At a juncture where he will stop, turn to your left and that will be the road.’ I followed the beast. Soon we came to a junction and the animal stopped. When I looked left, I saw Damascus. I hastened to the Jaami’ Musjid in Damascus. There I found some of my companions.

After I narrated my story, a group of people accompanied me to the mountain. Although we searched for the cave for three days, it was in vain. The cave had disappeared.

I went for Hajj seven times after this episode, but I could not locate the Buzrug to whom I was asked to convey Salaams. In the eighth year I finally found him between Maqaam-e-Ibraahim and the Well of Zam Zam. I first greeted him and requested him to make dua for me. Then I conveyed Ibraahim Kirmaani’s Salaam to him. In surprise he asked me: ‘Where did you meet Ibraahim

Kirmaani?’ The manner of the question gave me the impression that Ibraahim Kirmaani (rahmatullah alayh) had died. I therefore asked: Has he died? The Buzrug said: ‘Yes, he has died. At the time we were giving him ghusl, that bird arrived, threw itself on to the ground and flapping its wings, it also died. We buried the bird at the feet-side of Hadhrat Ibraahim Kirmaani (rahmatullah alayh).”

AN AABID’S DESIRE IS FULFILLED

An Aabid in a Musjid, in his Dua, supplicated: “O Rabbul Izzat! Today I desire to eat halwah, etc. (he specified in his dua the exact type of halwa, etc. he desired).” The Aabid was making this dua audibly. A trader who was sitting nearby, hearing this queer dua, said to himself: “This man is making this dua audibly so that I hear and fulfil his desire. His motive is only that I should feed him the halwah of his craving. Of what benefit is this scheme? If he had directly asked me, I would have fed him the halwah. But, now I shall never do it.”

The trader had concluded that the Aabid was an impostor. After completing his dua, the Aabid went to a corner in the Musjid and fell asleep while the trader remained where he was. Suddenly the trader saw a man with a cloth and the exact kind of halwah and food which the Aabid had requested in his dua. The stranger looked around the Musjid. When he saw the Aabid sleeping, he aroused him and presented the *dastarkhwaan* (table cloth) with the halwah, etc. The Aabid ate a small quantity and returned the remainder to the stranger.

The trader was observing the scene with astonishment. When the stranger was departing, the trader went up to him and said: “For Allah’s sake tell me are you acquainted with this Aabid or is there some hidden mystery in this episode of you bringing the food to him?” The stranger replied: “I do not know him. I am an ordinary labourer. I earn a small sum of money which is insufficient for needs of my family. For a full year I had the desire to eat the kind of food which I had presented to the Aabid. My wife and children have been yearning for this delicious halwah, but I could not afford it. Today, a man for whom I worked, unexpectedly paid me a large sum as my wage. I purchased the requisites for preparing the food and gave it to my wife.

Meanwhile, I fell asleep. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) appeared in my dream and said: ‘Today in your Musjid, a Wali of Allah is a guest. Present to him all the food which you have prepared today. He will eat some and return the remainder to you. If you fulfil this request, I guarantee your entry into Jannat.’ I have thus brought the food to the Aabid in obedience to the command of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).”

With a grieving heart for having allowed this wondrous opportunity to slip from his grasp, the trader implored: ‘I shall give you ten times the amount you have spent on this food in return for a small amount of the thawaab destined for you.’ The labourer said: ‘I cannot exchange even a little of this wonderful reward for the wealth of the entire world. It is a reward guaranteed by Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).”

The remorse, grief and hopelessness of the trader were truly lamentable. The lesson of this episode is never

to make any decision on the basis of baseless suspicion. Suspicion had deprived the wealthy man from the wonderful treasure promised by Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). What would the man of wealth had lost by feeding the Aabid even if he was truly an impostor? At the minimum, he would have fulfilled the desire of a beggar who was craving to eat something which he was unable to afford. Satisfying lawfully the yearning heart of a faqeer is more rewardable than a 100 Hajj according to Hadhrat Bishr Haafi (rahmatullah alayh). The wealthy and the proud ones should take note.

Allah Ta'ala has a variety of kinds of relationships with His Auliya. With some Auliya the relationship is extremely informal. Allah Ta'ala fulfils their precise desires directly and swiftly. Such golden opportunities should never be allowed to slip by. They are irreplaceable. An opportunity of this type allowed to slip by never returns again even if a man should spend his entire wealth in the Path of Allah with sincerity.

A FAQEER'S DEMAND

Hadhrat Ibraahim Khawwaas (rahmatullah alayh) narrated that once he was observing I'tikaaf (Nafl) in a Musjid. A faqeer in the same Musjid neither spoke nor ate anything for three days. On the fourth day, Hadhrat Khawwaas said to him: "Do you wish to eat something?" The Faqeer replied: "Hot bread and kebaab."

Hadhrat Ibraahim Khawwaas went out of the Musjid in search of hot bread and kebaab to fulfil the desire of the faqeer. He walked the entire day without being able to procure the food. (Most probably he did not have the

money for this food.) By Maghrib time he returned to the Musjid dejected.

After Isha when the Musjid doors had been closed, there was a knock at the door. When Hadhrat Khawwaa opened the door, he saw a man with a container of food. The man said: "This hot bread and kebaab are for the inmates of the Musjid." Hadhrat Khawwaas accepted it and presented it to the faqeer.

THE SINCERE REPENTER AND THE ADMONISHING RIVER

Hadhrat Ka'bul Ahbaar (radhiyallahu anhu) narrated the following anecdote of a sinner among Bani Israaeel. A man after committing zina went to take ghusl in the river. While he was bathing himself, he heard the river rebuking him: "Have you no shame! After repentance you repeat the same abomination!" The terrified sinner quickly emerged from the river and ran to a mountain. When he reached the top he found twelve Aabideen engaging in Thikrullaah. He joined their company.

After many months they all descended from the mountain and were going to the same spot where the river had admonished the sinner. He said to his twelve companions: "You proceed. I shall not go there because my sins are known at that place." The twelve Aabideen leaving him behind proceeded to the river. When they reached the spot, they heard the river saying: "O Aabideen! Where is your companion?" They said: "He refused to come because his sins are known here. He feels ashamed of himself." The river responded: "He has repented and has engrossed himself in the Pleasure of

Allah. I now love him. Bring him so that he engages in ibaadat here.”

The Aabideen informed the repentner and brought him to the river. All of them remained by the river, devoting all the time to ibaadat. After some time, the repentner died. The river spoke: “Bury him close to me.” They buried him at that spot. They slept the night near to the river and resolved to leave the place in the morning. In the morning they saw twelve fully grown trees near to the grave. The number of trees was a sign for them to remain by the river. Thus, they passed the remainder of their lives by the river until they died.

THE WEALTHY BUZRUG

A Buzrug was extremely wealthy. He spent his wealth munificently in the Path of Allah Ta’ala. One day his mureed said: “Hadhrat, it is improper for the Ahlullaah to hoard the world. You should distribute all your wealth in the Path of Allah.” The Buzrug said: “Good! Go and distribute all my wealth in the Path of Allah.” The mureed completed the task in one day. All the Buzrug’s wealth was distributed to the poor.

The next day an abundance of wealth came to the Buzrug from a variety of sources. Now he had more wealth than the amount which had been distributed in the Path of Allah. He said to his mureed: “Who can change the decree of Allah Ta’ala? Who can rebuff his bounties?”

GHEEBAT IS HARAAM

A Buzrug narrates: “I met a young man wearing a *jubbah* (cloak) with a jug in his hand. He said to me: ‘I am a

servant of Allah and adhere to taqwa. I eat the food which people discard. In this regard I wish to ask a mas'alah. Sometimes I pick up an item of food and find some ants on it. I remove the ants and eat the item. I would like to know if in doing so, am I not violating the rights of the ants?

The Buzrug thought: 'In the whole world there is no one with such taqwa. He is only advertising his piety by asking this question.' When the Buzrug again looked, he saw the young man standing on a platform of pure silver. My innermost thoughts were revealed to him, and he said: "Gheebat is haraam." He then promptly disappeared.

THE HABSHI BUZRUG

Hadhrat Muqbil (rahmatullah alayh) was a Habshi (African) Buzrug who worked as a caretaker of an orchard. A group of Fuqara went to visit Hadhrat Muqbil. They found him performing Salaat in the orchard where branjols were growing. The Fuqara sat down waiting for him to complete his Salaat. After he completed his Salaat, he came to us. From a packet he brought out some pieces of dry bread and salt. He offered this to us.

While the Fuqara were eating they engaged in a discussion regarding the Karaamaat (Miracles) of the Auliya. However, Hadhrat Muqbil was silent. The Fuqara said: "Hadhrat, we came specially to meet you and to acquire naseehat, but you are silent." Hadhrat Muqbil said: "What can I say to you? But, I know one person whose bond with Allah is such that if he requests Allah Ta'ala to transform all these branjols into gold, Allah Ta'ala will fulfil his wish."

Even before he completed his statement, all the branjol trees in the orchard became gold. The golden branjols dazzled in the sunlight. With the permission of Hadhrat Muqbil, one of the group uprooted a branjol tree. The whole tree was of gold. Another Faqeer picked up some golden leaves and golden branjols which had dropped from the uprooted tree.

Hadhrat Muqbil then performed two raka'ts Salaat and supplicated to Allah Ta'ala to revert the trees to their former natural state. Immediately the gold disappeared and the branjols were transformed into their natural state. In place of the uprooted golden tree, another tree sprang up. The golden branjols which had been acquired by the Faqueers remained gold.

THE VALUE OF THE AULIYA

A group of wealthy traders was in a ship on a voyage to Makkah to perform Hajj. The ship was caught in a storm and was wrecked. All the belongings of the passengers sank with the ship. The work of retrieving their expensive belongings was in operation. One very wealthy trader who had goods worth 50,000 dinars (gold coins) decided to abandon the effort and to proceed for Hajj. He knew that he would miss Hajj if he waited for his belongings to be retrieved. One pearl in the consignment of his goods had a value of 4,000 dinars.

When his companions tried to persuade him to remain, he said: "I take oath by Allah! I shall not remain and miss Hajj for all the wealth in the world. On the occasion of Hajj there is the opportunity of meeting the Auliya of Allah Ta'ala. There is immense benefit in meeting them. I have already experienced this." They

asked him to explain the benefit of meeting with the Auliya. He narrated the following episode:

“Once we were proceeding for Hajj through the desert. Water was not available anywhere. The travellers in the caravan were in great distress. The little water which some passengers had was being sold at ridiculously inflated prices. Later, water was not available even at exorbitant prices. Everyone was suffering. Overcome with thirst, I walked from the caravan in search of water. I saw a Faqeer sitting with a jug and a spear near to a dry pond. When I came near to him, he implanted his spear into the dry pond, and the water soon gushed up forcefully to the brim. All the travellers quenched their thirst and filled all the water containers. Now tell me, how can I stop here when such servants of Allah could be met?”

MIRACULOUS AFFIRMATION OF FORGIVENESS

Hadhrat Zunnun Misri (rahmatullah alayh) narrates: “Near to the Ka’bah Shareef I saw a young man performing Salaat in abundance. I said to him: ‘You are performing much Salaat!’ He said: ‘I am supplicating for consent to return.’”

After a short while I saw a letter descending from the sky. In the letter was inscribed: *“This letter is from Allah The Most Forgiving, to the grateful servant. Return! All your sins have been forgiven.”*

THE KARAAMAT OF SHAIKH DAAMGHAABI

A Buzrug narrating his wonderful experience said: “Once I was in Madinah Tayyibah. When I reached the

Raudhah Tayyibah (the Holy Grave) I saw a Buzrug reciting a farewell Salaam. After completing the Salaam, he left, and I followed him until we reached Zul Hulaifah. Here he performed Salaat and donned Ihraam. I did likewise. When he left, I again followed him.

He turned and said to me: ‘What is your intention?’ I said: ‘I wish to accompany you.’ He said: ‘I shall not take you with me.’ After considerable pleading, he relented and instructed me to follow him in his footsteps. He began walking and I followed in his footsteps. He did not follow the normal road, but walked along an isolated and unknown path. There were no other travellers on this road.

We had walked for a very short time when I saw some lights ahead of me. He informed me that it was Musjid-e-Aishah (which is three miles from Makkah). Then he said: ‘Now you proceed ahead or I shall do so.’ I said: ‘Whatever you decide.’ He went ahead and I went to sleep in Musjid-e-Aishah.

I left for Makkah before Fajr. After making Tawaaf and Sa-ee, I went to meet Shaikh Abu Bakr Kitaani. Many other Mashaaikh were present. The Shaikh asked: ‘When did you come?’ I said: ‘I arrived this night.’ The Shaikh: ‘From where have you come?’ I said: ‘From Madinah Tayyibah.’ Shaikh: ‘When did you leave Madinah?’ I said: ‘This very night. I travelled and also slept.’ The Mashaaikh who were present looked at one another with surprise. The Shaikh then asked me: ‘With whom did you come?’ I described the Buzrug whom I had accompanied. The Shaikh said: ‘He is Shaikh Abu Ja’far Daamghaani (rahmatullah alayh).

The Shaikh further asked me: ‘While you were walking, how did you perceive the ground under your feet?’ I said: ‘Like waves gushing under a boat, striking it and breaking up.’ ”

AID FROM THE UNSEEN

A Buzrug who was with a caravan proceeding for Hajj had pledged to Allah Ta’ala that he would not seek aid from anyone besides Allah Ta’ala. Although he was with the caravan, he walked. He had no relatives or friends in the caravan. Several days passed without him eating anything nor did anyone offer him anything. He became extremely weak. He was on the verge of breaking his pledge due to the dire straits in which he was. However, he mustered up courage and resolved to sustain the pledge regardless of the consequences. The time came that he was forced to sit down utterly exhausted and weak. The caravan went ahead.

Stranded in the hot desert, he laid down anticipating death. Suddenly he saw a man on horseback approaching him. When the man reached him, he alighted from his horse and gave him water to drink as well as some food. He asked if the Buzrug wished to link up with the caravan. The Buzrug said: “The caravan is gone. How can I join it?” The horseman said: “Follow me.” He took only a few steps, and said: “Wait here. You are now in front of the caravan. It will soon arrive.” The horseman disappeared and soon the caravan arrived.

A SHAIKH IS REPRIMANDED

Shaikh Banaan (rahmatullah alayh) narrating an experience said: “Once I was on a Hajj journey. I had

taken along ample provisions for the road. Along the journey suddenly a lady appeared and rebukingly said: ‘Banaan! You are a labourer carrying all these provisions. Do you think that Allah will not feed you?’ The lady disappeared as suddenly as she had appeared. I immediately discarded all my provisions and continued walking for three days without having anything to eat.

While walking I found a lost purse with considerable money. I picked it up with the intention of searching for its owner. The thought crossed my mind that the owner would reward me. As this thought went through my mind, the same lady suddenly appeared in front of me and exclaimed: ‘Banaan! You are a trader. You picked up the purse hoping to be rewarded.’ She flung a few dirhams (silver coins) towards me, and said: ‘Take these.’, and promptly disappeared. The dirhams were adequate for my entire journey.”

THE VALUABLE DIRHAM

Hadhrat Abu Amr Zujaaji (rahmatullah alayh) was presented a dirham (silver coin) by Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi (rahmatullahi alayh) on the occasion when he (Hadhrat Zujaaji) was going for Hajj. He tied the dirham in his belt and left. Throughout the journey he never had the need to spend the dirham. At each halt, arrangements for needs were fulfilled in different ways. The dirham remained in his belt until he returned. When he went to meet, Hadhrat Junaid, then without any reference to the dirham, Hadhrat Junaid stretched his hand and said: “Give me my dirham, and tell me how valuable it was.” I returned the dirham to him and said: “It was extremely valuable.”

Apparently, due to the barkat of the dirham, all the needs of Hadhrat Zujaaji were fulfilled in other ways. Thus the dirham remained intact, hence Hadhrat Junaid requested its return for the benefit of someone else who may be proceeding for Hajj.

RABI' BIN SULAIMAN'S HAJJ IN THE HEARTS OF THE FUQARA

Hadhrat Rabi' Bin Sulaiman (rahmatullah alayh) with his brother and some others were in a caravan on their way to Makkah Muazzamah to perform Hajj. When the caravan arrived in Kufa, he went to the marketplace to purchase some provisions. While he was wandering around the marketplaces, he came by a derelict area. He saw a dead mule and an old women cutting pieces of meat from the animal and filling it in her basket. He thought: "She must be a food-seller. She will probably feed this haraam meat to clients. I should reprimand and prevent her."

When the woman left the place, Hadhrat Rabi' followed her at a distance. After walking quite a distance, the woman came to an old house. After knocking, the door opened and she went inside. There were four little girls who were her daughters. She placed the meat in front of the girls. The girls cut small pieces and began roasting it on the fire while Hadhrat Rabi' was viewing the scene from the window.

Unable to tolerate it, he exclaimed from outside: "O servant of Allah! For Allah's sake do not eat that meat."

The lady retorted: "Who are you?"

Hadhrat Rabi': "I am a foreigner."

Lady: "What concern do you have with this? We have been suffering for the past three years. We are without any helper."

Hadhrat Rabi': "Besides Majusis (fire-worshippers), there are no people of any other religions who consume carrion (dead meat)."

Lady: "We are aware that it is not permissible to eat carrion. But we are in dire straits. We have been starving since the last four days. We are from the family of the Nabi. We are Sayyids. The father of these girls have died and whatever wealth he had left is exhausted. We are now starving."

Hadhrat Rabi' Bin Sulaiman broke down crying. He returned to the caravan and informed his brother and the others that he has cancelled his intention of Hajj. Everyone tried their best to convince him of his folly. They explained the virtues of Hajj to him, but he was firm in his resolution of cancelling his proposed Hajj. He did not inform them of the circumstances which constrained him to cancel his intention.

He took his garments, his other provisions and his 600 dirhams and set off to the lady's home. He purchased flour with 100 dirhams and cloth for 100 dirhams. He concealed the balance of 400 dirhams inside the flour. He presented everything to the old woman. They thanked him profusely. Each one of them made a dua for Hadhrat Rabi'. The lady said: "May Allah Ta'ala forgive all your sins and bestow the thawaab of Hajj to you, and grant you Jannat. May Allah Ta'ala grant you such a reward which will be apparent to you."

The eldest daughter in her dua said: "May Allah Jalle Shaanuhu double your reward and may He forgive all

your sins.” The second daughter said: “May Allah Ta’ala award you much more than what you have given us.” The third daughter supplicated: “May Allah Ta’ala resurrect you with our grandfather, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).” The youngest daughter said: “O Allah! Grant him who has been kind to us a swift and a better reward, and forgive all his sins.”

Hadhrat Rabi’ returned to the city. The caravan had already departed. He waited in Kufa for the return of the caravan. He resolved to at least welcome the returning Hujjaaj and obtain their dua. When the first caravan of Hujjaaj appeared in front of him, tears flowed from his eyes on account of grief for not having been able to perform Hajj. When he met the Hujjaaj, he said to them: “May Allah Ta’ala accept your Hajj and reward you for the expenses incurred.” They said to him: “What kind of dua is this?”

Hadhrat Rabi’: “It is the supplication of a man who has been deprived of being present at the Door (i.e. in Makkah).”

Hujjaaj: “What are you saying? Why do you speak in this manner when you were present with us in Arafaat, and you had made Tawaaf with us? You now speak as if you had not gone for Hajj.”

Hadhrat Rabi’ thought to himself: “This is Allah’s kindness. He is enumerating me among the Hujjaaj.” After a short while the caravan with his brother and companions arrived. When he met them he said: “May Allah Ta’ala accept your efforts and your Hajj.”

Hujjaaj: “You speak as if you had not gone with whereas you had performed Hajj with us, but you deny it.”

A man from the Hujjaaj advancing towards Hadhrat Ibn Rabi' said: "Why do you deny? Were you not with us in Makkah and Madinah? Did you not give me this purse to keep in trust for you outside Baab-e-Jibraeel when you had completed Ziyaarat of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)?"

The man then presented the purse to Hadhrat Rabi'. On the purse was inscribed: "*Whoever transacts with us, gains.*" This was the first time that he had ever seen the purse. Nevertheless, he took the purse and came away. After Isha' Salaat he completed his wazeefah (quota of Thikrullah) and fell into deep thought regarding this issue. He wondered: "What is the underlying mystery? I was all the time in Kufa, but the Hujjaaj insisted that I was with them during the Hajj. While sitting and reflecting, he became drowsy and fell asleep.

In his sleep, he dreamt that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) appeared. Hadhrat Rabi' made Salaam to Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and kissed his hands. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was full of smiles. Responding to the Salaam, Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "O Rabi'! Tell me, how many persons have I made to witness that you have performed Hajj, but you have not accepted it. (*This was a reference to the many Hujjaaj who testified that they had seen Hadhrat Rabi' performing Hajj with them.*) Listen! The explanation is this: When you presented all your provisions to the lady who is of my Family, and you cancelled your Hajj intention, I made dua to Allah Ta'ala to grant you a better reward. Allah Ta'ala accepted my dua, and created an Angel of your appearance. Allah Ta'ala ordered the Angel to perform Hajj on your behalf

every year until Qiyaamah. On earth the substitute for your 600 dirhams is the purse which contains 600 ashrafis (gold coins).” Then Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) made the very same statement which was inscribed on the purse.

When Hadhrat Rabi’s eyes opened, he looked into the purse and found 600 ashrafis in it.

SAVED FROM THE LION’S MOUTH

A woman gave her only bread to a hungry beggar, then set off to the field with her husband’s bread. In one hand she had her husband’s bread and in the other arm she carried her baby. Suddenly there appeared a lion which grabbed the baby from her arms. Spontaneously a hand appeared from nowhere, clouted the lion and retrieved the baby from its mouth. A Voice said: “We have saved your baby in lieu of the bread you gave to the beggar.”

A WONDERFUL EPISODE OF ALLAH’S PROTECTION

A Buzrug narrated: “Once while I was making Tawaaf of Baitullah Shareef, my gaze fell on a woman who was carrying a small child on her shoulders. She was saying: ‘Ya Kareem! Ya Kareem! (O Gracious One!) I remember my pledge with You.’

I said to her: ‘What is your pledge with Allah Ta’ala?’ She narrated a wonderful episode as follows: ‘I was on board ship on a voyage. The ship was caught in a mighty storm and it sank. There were only three survivors. Myself, my baby and a Habashi. I with my baby were on a timber board and the Hanshi was on another timber board. While our two rafts were floating, the Habashi

displayed evil designs. He paddled his raft close to our raft and clambered on board. Then he expressed his evil lust. I told him: 'Have you no fear? In our straits, no one but Allah can save us. In this calamity only obedience to Allah can save us, but despite our predicament you think of evil.' He said: 'Leave all this talk. I shall do as I desire.'

When I realized his determination to commit immorality, I pinched my sleeping baby. The baby shrieked loudly. I said to the Habashi: 'Let me first calm the baby.' I thought that I should do whatever is in my power, then leave the rest to Allah Ta'ala. The evil Habashi grabbed my baby and threw it into the sea. At that moment, I looked to the heaven and supplicated to Allah Ta'ala for succour. Even before I completed my dua, a huge animal appeared from the ocean and with one strike sucked the evil man into its jaws and disappeared with him under the sea. By His grace and mercy, Allah Ta'ala saved me from the clutches of the immoral villain.

My raft drifted until the waves buffeted it to an island. I resolved to remain on the deserted island until Allah Ta'ala makes some other arrangement for me. I survived on the water and the greenery on the island. On the fifth day I saw a ship on the horizon. I mounted a hill and with a cloth I waved at the ship. A small boat was lowered from the ship and three men came in it to the island. I went with them to the ship. When I was on board, I was astonished to see my baby in the lap of a man.

I was beyond myself. I leapt forward, grabbed and hugged my baby, declaring that it was my child. The people of the boat said: 'You must be mad! How can this

be your baby?’ After I narrated my story, the people said: ‘Now listen to our story so that you understand how Allah Ta’ala has delivered your baby to you. While our ship was sailing, a huge animal suddenly emerged from the ocean. On its back was this baby. It swam in front and blocked the way of our ship. A Voice proclaimed: ‘Take this baby with you otherwise you will be destroyed.’

We retrieved the baby from the animal’s back. The animal then disappeared under the water.’

The lady said: ‘Everyone in the ship at that moment repented sincerely for all their sins and pledged to Allah Ta’ala never to commit any sins.’”

IBRAAHIM KHAWWAAS AND KHIDHR

Hadhrat Ibrahim Khawwaas (rahmatullah alayh) narrated the following episode: “Once on a journey through the desert I was overwhelmed by thirst and exhaustion, and I fell down unconscious. Someone appeared and poured water into my mouth and I was revived. I saw that it was an extremely handsome man on a beautiful horse. He told me to mount on to the horse. After mounting, we went a very short distance, and I saw Madinah Tayyibah in front of me. He asked: ‘Do you know this place?’ I said: ‘Yes, it is Madinah Tayyibah.’ He told me to dismount, and said: ‘When you visit the Raudhah of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), say: ‘Your brother, Khidhr has conveyed his Salaam.’ ”

RASULULLAH’S REMEDY

Allaamah Ahmad Bin Qustalaani (rahmatullah alayh) was a famous Muhaddith. Once he became severely ill.

All the physicians gave up hope. He remained bedridden for several years. He supplicated to Allah Ta'ala to grant him cure by the *waseelah* of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). One night he saw in his dream a man approaching with a slip of paper in his hand. He announced: "Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) has sent this medicine for Ahmad Bin Qustalaani." When his eyes opened, he was completely cured. There was not a trace of his illness.

THE SEVEN FIRE-WORSHIPPERS

In Baghdad seven fire-worshippers came to meet Hadhrat Khwaajah Mueenuddin Chishti (rahmatullah alayh). He asked them: "Why do you worship the fire?" They said: "So that it should not burn us" Hadhrat Mueenuddin said: "The poor fire cannot burn without the command of Allah Ta'ala. Look at my shoe. I shall throw it into the fire." He did so. After some time he retrieved the shoe. It was exactly the same as it was. There was not a trace of any effect of the fire on the shoe. When the fire-worshippers witnessed this miraculous event, they all accepted Islam.

SULTAN SHAMS

Once in Delhi, a boy with a bow and arrow passed near to Hadhrat Mueenuddin Chishti (rahmatullah alayh). He commented: "This boy will become the king of Delhi. I have seen it written in Looch-e-Mahfooz. He will join my *Silsilah*, (i.e. he will become a mureed)." In the year 1220 Hijri, this boy became the famous king Sultan Shams. He also became a disciple of Hadhrat Mueenuddin Chishti.

THE DAM IN THE JUG

The Hindus of Ajmer had blockaded the way to the dam to prevent the companions of Hadhrat Mueenuddin Chishti from obtaining water. Hadhrat Mueenuddin instructed one of mureeds to silently creep to the dam and fill a jug with the dam's water. As soon as the mureed had filled the jug, the entire dam dried up. It appeared as there never had been water in the dam.

Hadhrat Mueenuddin and his companions used the water of the jug. As soon as some water was used, the jug would miraculously fill up again. Thus the quantity of water in the jug remained constant. Meanwhile the inhabitants of the locality who were dependent on the dam for their needs were suffering.

The yogee, Jaypaal who was India's most famous sorcerer had been called by the Rajah (Hindu king) to neutralize and expel Hadhrat Mueenuddin. When he realized his inability and impotency in opposing Hadhrat Mueenuddin he went to Hadhrat and said: "The people are dying of thirst. A Faqeer should be a source of comfort for people. Why do you cause suffering to them. A Faqeer should benefit the people."

Hadhrat Mueenuddin instructed his mureed to empty the jug in the dry dam. As soon as the jug was emptied, the dam filled up and flowed strongly. Miraculously the whole dam was transferred into the jug. This is the Quadrat of Allah Ta'ala.

MIRACULOUS CROSSING OF THE RIVER

Hadhrat Fareeduddeen Shakarganj (rahmatullah alayh) narrated that once he was travelling on foot with Hadhrat

Bakhtiyaar Kaaki (rahmatullah alayh). When they reached a river, there was no boat to take them across. Hadhrat Bakhtiyaar began reciting Surah Ikhlāas. Even before he completed the Surah, the river split open and a dry path appeared. Both walked on the path until they reached the other side.

AN IDOLATER BECOMES A MUSLIM

Once while on a journey in the mountains, Hadhrat Jalaaluddin Kabeerul Auliya (rahmatullah alayh) saw a Hindu mendicant sitting deep in contemplation with closed eyes. Hadhrat Jalaaluddin stood in front of him for a few moments. The concentration of Hadhrat Jalaaluddin produced a strange effect in the mendicant's heart. He opened his eyes. The Hindu concluded that the stranger must be a perfect spirituality, hence his spiritual power. The Hindu took a stone from his bag and presented it to Hadhrat Jalaaluddin, and said: "Steel rubbed with this stone will be transformed into gold."

Hadhrat Jalaaluddin, smiled, took the stone and threw it into a nearby dam. Greatly offended, the Hindu exclaimed: "I acquired this treasure after great effort. Thinking you to be a mendicant, I took pity on you and gave you this treasure. You are so unappreciative that you destroyed it."

Hadhrat Jalaaluddin said: "You gave it to me. I am entitled to do with my property as I deem fit." The Hindu said: "While I am aware of this, you grieved me by destroying it in front of my eyes. I demand that you return stone." Hadhrat Jalaaluddin said: "Come here. Recognize your stone and take it." When the Hindu came and looked into the dam he saw the water surface filled

with identical stones. The Hindu was astonished and was unable to recognize his stone. Hadhrat Jalaaluddin said: “Rub any stone on metal and see what happens.”

The Hindu experimented with several stones with the same effect. Metal was transformed into gold. After prolonged search, the Hindu identified his stone. Along with retrieving his stone, he stealthily took one more stone and hid it. With his spiritual vision (Noor-e-Baatin) Hadhrat Jalaaluddin became aware of the theft, and commented: “Why did you take two stones?” The Hindu mendicant was thus put to shame. Apologizing he said: “Impart to me some of your Ma’rifat.” Hadhrat Jalaaluddin said: This treasure cannot be obtained without Islam.”

Convinced of the truth, the Hindu mendicant accepted Islam. Within a few days he attained the ranks of the Auliya of Allah.

AN ATHEIST ASTRONOMER EMBRACES ISLAM

Hadhrat Nizaamuddin Balkhi (rahmatullah alayh) was journeying in the mountains of Balkh. It was Zuhr time. Water was no where available in the barren mountain range. Hadhrat Nizaamuddin struck a rock with his *asaa* (staff), and a fountain of cold sweet water gushed out. He made wudhu and performed Salaat.

The news of this miracle reached a nearby settlement. An atheist astronomer denying the karaamat (miracle) said that the water was a natural consequence of the Water Star being in a specific juxtaposition. According to him, when the Water Star is in this specific juxtaposition in relation to other heavenly stars, then the effect of this

is the gushing of water from the earth in certain locations. In this way he explained the water fountain and refuted the miracle.

The astronomer nevertheless came to meet Hadhrat Nizaamuddin. He asked the astronomer to accompany him into the mountain range. They reached a place which was totally barren. There was no sign of water anywhere. Hadhrat Nizaamuddin said: "Look if the Water Star is perhaps not in that specific juxtaposition (i.e. which he had mentioned earlier)." The astronomer made some calculations and said: "It is not in that position. In fact, the Fire Star is in that juxtaposition."

Hadhrat Nizaamuddin struck a rock with his staff, and a fountain of cold sweet water gushed out. The astronomer was astonished. He conceded the reality of the karaamat. Convinced now of the truth, he accepted Islam.

A SADHU EMBRACES ISLAM

When Hadhrat Shaikh Abdul Quddus (rahmatullah alayh) first came to the village Gangoh (in India), he found at one location numerous disciples of a Sadhu, but the latter was not present. When Shaikh Abdul Quddus enquired about the whereabouts of the Sadhu, his disciples said that he has isolated himself since one year. No one is able to go to him. He has enclosed himself in a cloisture. There was only one small aperture in one wall. The entire cloisture was sealed.

Shaikh Abdul Quddus sat in contemplation in front of the aperture. His *roohaniyat* (spiritual power of the soul) overwhelmed his physical body and he entered through the aperture. The Sadhu was sitting totally absorbed in

his trance-like contemplation entirely oblivious of the Shaikh's presence. Hadhrat Shaikh with his *Rooh* created a spiritual turbulence in the Sadhu's heart and extricated the Sadhu from his trance. He was astonished to see the stranger. He asked: "Who are you? How did you enter?" Hadhrat Shaikh said: "I am a servant of Allah and I entered here by the power of Allah. Now demonstrate to me the extent of your spiritual prowess." He said: "Just watch! I shall transform myself into water." He promptly dissolved into water. Hadhrat Shaikh dipped a cloth in the water. An extremely foul stench was emitted by the cloth.

The Sadhu soon transformed himself into his original form. Hadhrat Shaikh said that he too will dissolve into water. He told the Sadhu when he becomes water, the Sadhu should dip a cloth in the water. Hadhrat Shaikh Abul Quddus dissolved into water. The Sadhu dipped the cloth in the water. When he removed it, a wonderful fragrance emitted. Hadhrat Shaikh returned to his original form.

The Sadhu commented: "Although we both are perfect in this sphere, nevertheless, there is the difference in the odour." Hadhrat Shaikh Abdul Quddus said: "The foul stench is the stench of kufr, and the sweet odour is the fragrance of Islam. That is the difference." The Sadhu was convinced of the truth of Islam. He accepted Islam. Hadhrat Shaikh Abdul Quddus (rahmatullah alayh) taught him to recite the Kalimah.

The spot where Hadhrat Shaikh Abdul Quddus's grave is today, is the place where the cloisture of the Sadhu used to be.

A MALICIOUS SADHU IS PUNISHED

A Hindu Sadhu who hated Muslims came to the grave of Shaikh Alaauddeen Saabir (rahmatullah alayh). He flattened the grave. After digging, he reached the *Lahd* (the indentation at the bottom in the Qiblah-side wall of the grave). After he removed a few bricks from the *Lahd* he peered inside. Something grabbed his face and throttled him until he died on the spot. During that night some of Hadhrat Saabir's mureeds saw the Shaikh telling them in a dream: "A man with evil intentions came into my grave. He has already suffered his punishment. Come and remove his body." In the morning the mureeds went to the grave. They dragged the body and dumped it.

(END OF BARAKAATUS SAALIHEN)

THE ROOH OF TASAWWUF

Hadhrat Saeed Bin Uthmaan (rahmatullah alayh) narrates that he heard Hadhrat Zunnun Misri (rahmatullah alayh) say: "The basis of the entire structure of the Tareeq (the Path of Tasawwuf) is in four things:

- 1) The Love of Allah Ta'ala. This is the first and the greatest fundamental of Tasawwsuf.
- 2) Aversion for the world. This is the lowest stage.
- 3) Adherence and obedience to the Qur'aan Majeed (*i.e. the Shariah.*)
- 4) The fear of one's condition (*i.e. lofty status of Imaan*) may change. (*Imaan, said Rasulullah – sallallahu alayhi wasallam – is suspended between fear and hope.*)

(MAQAALAAT-E-SUFIYAH)

EFFECT OF DISOBEDIENCE

Hadhrat Fudhail Bin Iyaadh (rahmatullah alayh) said: “When I commit a sin I observe its detrimental effect in my ass and in my servant. They become disobedient to me.”

ANONYMITY

Hadhrat Bishr Haafi (rahmatullah alayh) said: “A man who desires recognition and the acclaim of people will not experience the sweetness of the Hereafter (Aakhirah).

SOUL-SEARCHING

Hadhrat Hamdoon (rahmatullah alayh) said: “A person who reflects on the lives of the Salf-e-Saaliheen (the illustrious Auliya of the early ages of Islam), will realize how far he lags behind (in the spiritual path).”

THE CONSEQUENCES OF AN EVIL GAZE

Hadhrat Ibn Jalaal (rahmatullah alayh) narrated that once while walking with Hadhrat Zunnun Misri (rahmatullah alayh), he (Ibn Jalaal) intentionally stared at a very handsome lad. He said to Hadhrat Zunnun Misri: “Hadhrat! Will Allah really punish such a beautiful face?” Hadhrat Zunnun said: “You will suffer the punishment of this evil gaze.”

Hadhrat Ibn Jalaal said: “The consequence of my evil gaze surfaced 20 years later. I forgot the entire Qur’aan Majeed.”

May Allah Ta’ala save us from the evil of our nafs and its calamities. Those who enjoy a lofty spiritual rank are severely punished for their sins and errors.

There are many pious people who at one stage had wallowed in sin and immorality. After reformation their moral and spiritual life improved. With the passage of time they sometimes become over-confident with the treasure of their piety. This develops into obliviousness of their past life of sin. Meanwhile they have forgotten about Taubah, labouring under the impression that their newfound life of Taqwa and Tahaarat is an adequate compensation. The idea of their present state of piety deceives them and lulls them into obliviousness (ghaflat). When one's past life of transgression has been effaced without adequate repentance, one's present state of piety sometimes produces over-confidence and even vanity which is an extremely subtle spiritual malady. Such pious people sometimes frown when they see others entrapped in sin and transgression which once upon a time was their own lifestyle. The frown is evidence for the *ujub* (vanity) concealed in the folds of their nafs. Therefore, occasional remembrance of the past state of corruption creates remorse and humility which divert the gaze from one's piety. It is essential to repent for all sins, those which one remembers and those which one cannot remember.

CASH COMPENSATION

Hadhrat Abul Hasan Muhammad Muzayyan (rahmatullah alayh) said: "A sin followed by the commission of another sin is the cash (or immediate) punishment for the previous sin. Similarly, a good deed followed by another good deed is the cash *thawaab* (reward) for the first good deed."

Besides the 'cash' compensation, the greater compensation – punishment or reward – will be in the Akhirah.

SIGN OF AN ACCEPTED TAUBAH

Hadhrat Bu-Shaikhi (rahmatullah alayh) explained that the sign of an accepted Taubah is an aversion in the heart when one recalls one's past sins. If one feels disgusted when a past sin comes to mind, such disgust is evidence of a valid Taubah. It is the Sunnah of Allah Ta'ala to efface mental pleasure when a sin is remembered by a person whose Taubah has been accepted.

In fact, aversion and disgust for even sins which have not been committed are natural in a person of true Taqwa and humility. When shaitaan assaults such a person with the thought of sin, he (the man of Taqwa) recoils with aversion and immediately seeks Allah's protection. He never accepts the evil whisper for ruminating and deriving nafsani pleasure.

HONOUR AND DISGRACE

Hadhrat Zunnun Misri (rahmatullah alayh) said: "The greatest honour which Allah Ta'ala has conferred on a person is his recognition of the contemptibility and villainy of his own nafs. And, the greatest humiliation which Allah Ta'ala has imposed on a man is his obliviousness of the villainy and contemptibility of his own nafs."

GRATITUDE FOR THIKR

Someone said to Hadhrat Abu Uthmaan Hareeri (rahmatullah alayh: "I do not derive pleasure from my

thikr.” He said: “Be grateful to Allah Ta’ala Who has adorned your tongue with His Thikr.”

PAINFUL REMINDER OF THIKR

A Buzrug says that once while travelling through a desolate wilderness he came across a man who was engrossed in Thikrullaah. Suddenly there appeared a lion who struck him with its paw and ripped out a piece of flesh from his body. The Thaakir as well as I lapsed into unconsciousness. When we had revived, I asked: “What is the mystery underlying this episode.” He said: “Allah Ta’ala has appointed this beast as a guard over me. Whenever I become a bit indolent with thikr, then the lion appears and bites me as you have observed.”

MAGNANIMITY

Hadhrat Haarithah Muhaasibi (rahmatullah alayh) said: “Magnanimity is that a man is just to others without expecting them to be just to him.”

A group of Saaliheen visited a Buzrug who was famed for his magnanimity. The Buzrug requested his servant to spread the *dastarkhwaan* (the food-cloth / tablecloth). The servant appeared to ignore the request. He complied only after several requests. When he laid out the dastarkhwaan, the Buzrug asked him the reason for the delay. The servant said: “There was an ant of the dastarkhwaan. I considered it ill-mannered to place the dastarkhwaan with the ant in front of the guests, and I considered it un-magnanimous to forcibly remove the ant, hence I waited until the ant had departed. The guests commented: “You have indeed acted with lofty

magnanimity. A man of your calibre deserves to be the servant of the magnanimous ones.”

THE SWORD OF THIKR

The Mashaaiikh say that remembrance of Allah with the heart is a sword with which the thaakir fights his enemies and wards off calamities. When the thaakir focuses his attention on Allah Ta’ala at the time of calamities, these are warded off.

THE CALAMITY OF DIVERSION FROM ALLAH

Hadhrat Abu Tiraab Bakhshi (rahmatullah alayh) said: “When the heart of man habitually ignores Allah Ta’ala, he becomes involved in vilifying the Auliya of Allah.”

ALLAH ARRANGED THE JANAAZAH OF A DEVOTEE

Hadhrat Muzayyin Kabeeri (rahmatullah alayh) narrating one of his experiences, said: “While I was in Makkah Muazzamah, I was suddenly overwhelmed by a state of spiritual turbulence and the urge to go on a journey. I resolved to journey to Madinah Tayyibah. When I reached the proximity of Beer-e-Ma-oonah, I saw a young man lying on the ground. He was in his death throes. I made *talqeen* of *La ilaha il lallaahu* to him. Opening his eyes, he said: “It matters not if I am dying. My heart is brimming with Divine Love. Honourable people die with this Love.” He let out a scream and his soul departed from his physical body. I made the arrangements for his Janaazah. After completing the

burial, the urge to go on the journey was effaced from my heart. I therefore, returned to Makkah Muazzamah.”

Allah Ta’ala had constrained Hadhrat Kabeeri with the urge to travel so that he would undertake the Janaazah of the Devotee.

ELIMINATION OF AQL

Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Abbaas (radhiyallahu anhu) said: “There will dawn an age when the Aql (intelligence) of people will be eliminated. Among thousands there will be only one man of intelligence.

THE SALAAM OF FEMALES

A man once visited Hadhrat Zunnun Misri (rahmatullah alayh) and said: “My wife conveys her salaam to you.” Hadhrat Zunnun said: “Do not deliver the Salaam of females to me.”

A TRUE AALIM

Hadhrat Ma’roof Karkhi (rahmatullah alayh) said: “When an Aalim practises in accordance with his Ilm (Knowledge), then the hearts of the Mu’mineen incline to him with love. Only those in whose hearts lurk the disease of falsehood dislike him.”

REFUSING A SINCERE GIFT

Hadhrat Ibraahim Bin Adham narrated that once he met Hadhrat Khidhr (alayhis salaam). Hadhrat Khidhr presented him with a green utensil filled with soup. Hadhrat Ibn Adham refused to accept it. Hadhrat Khidhr commented: “I have heard the Malaaikeh say: ‘If a man refuses acceptance of a gift presented to him with

sincerity, then his need will not be fulfilled even when he asks.’ ”

If there is no valid Shar’i reason for refusing acceptance of a gift presented with sincerity and love, it should not be rejected.

ABSTAIN FROM THREE PERSONS

Hadhrat Yahya Bin Muaaz (rahmatullah alayh) admonishing his mureedeen, said: “Stay away from the company of three persons: Ghaafil Ulama (i.e. Ulama who are careless in matters of the Deen and Thikrullaah); Muballigheen who flatter and conceal the Haqq; Indolent (lazy and unconcerned) Sufis, i.e. such persons who engage in abundance of Nafil acts prior to the acquisition of adequate Knowledge which is Waajib.

WISDOM FOR THE AGE

Hadhrat Abu Turaab Bakhshi (rahmatullah alayh) said: “In every age Allah Ta’ala manifests such words of wisdom and knowledge on the tongues of the Ulama (i.e. Ulama-e-Haqq) which are necessary for the requisites of that age.”

INTELLECTUAL DESTRUCTION

Hadhrat Muhammad Ibn Ismaail Maghrabi (rahmatullah alayh) said: “He who does not abstain from the calamities of his Aql, by means of his Aql, to protect his Aql, will be destroyed by his Aql.”

When the Aql (intelligence) is utilized beyond the confines of the Shariah, the consequence is the destruction of that person. Philosophers, scientists and atheists have all fallen victim to intellectual destruction.

EXCESS ENGROSSMENT IN ILM-E-ZAAHIR

(Ilm-e-Zaahir refers to textual knowledge or book-knowledge such as Fiqh, Tafseer, Hadith, Mantiq, Falsafah, etc.)

Hadhrat Muhammad Ibn Ismaail Maghrabi (rahmatullah alayh) narrated: “Once in a dream I saw Qiyaamat in progress. At one location a beautiful *dastarkhwaan* (food-cloth) was spread for the Sufiya (the Auliya of Allah). When I attempted to join the Sufiya, I was prevented. It was said to me: ‘This is reserved for the Sufiya.’ I said: ‘I too am from the Sufiya.’ An Angel said: ‘Yes, you too are from among them, but your desire to achieve excellence and ascendancy in Hadith over your contemporaries prevents you from joining the ranks of the Sufiya here.’ In consternation I said: ‘I repent.’ My eyes opened. I then involved myself in the Tareeq (Path) of the Sufiya, and soothed myself with the knowledge that there were many other Ulama for expounding Hadith.”

Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh) commented: “When the Ulama are engaging in the ta’leem and tableegh of Ilm-e-Zaahir, they should also involve themselves in Islaah of the Baatin (moral reformation), Ibaadat and Thikr. They should not become excessively engrossed in Ilm-e-Zaahir. The objective of Ilm is Amal-e-Saheeh (i.e. to practise the acts of the Shariah correctly), and this is the aim of the Tareeq.

Another explanation could also be defective niyyat (intention) accompanying the pursuit and dissemination of Ilm-e-Zaahir. The Angel in the dream stated the reason for preventing Hadhrat Maghrabi was his desire

to surpass his contemporaries in Ilm-e-Zaahir. This desire corrupts Ikhlaas (sincerity). The Angel did not refer to engrossment in Ilm-e-Zaahir for the sake of propagating and defending the Deen. The dividing line between riya and ikhlaas is extremely fine, blurred and sometimes imperceptible to even the Saaliheen. Then, Allah Ta'ala by His mercy and kindness purifies the Wali from the defective niyyat with naseehat in dreams, as well as in a variety of other ways, e.g. a word of admonition or wisdom uttered by a little child or by an animal or by means of a misfortune, etc.

VALUE THE TAUFEEQ

Hadhrat Abu Hamzuh Baghdaadi (rahmatullah alayh) said: “When Allah Ta’ala grants a man the taufeeq of doing a good deed, then he should hold on firmly to that way. He should beware of casting his gaze on the good deed he renders, for such gazes will develop into pride. Be grateful for the taufeeq to do good. Pride will demote you from your pedestal.”

A LADY’S UNADULTERATED SINCERITY

Shaikh Abdullah Qarshi Majzoom (rahmatullah alayh) suffered from the disease of leprosy. No woman would marry a leper. A pious lady resolved to marry him purely for the Pleasure of Allah Ta’ala. She had no worldly or nafsani motive. After the Nikah the Shaikh made Dua to Allah Ta’ala to reward her sincerity by curing him. His was immediately cured of his leprosy and he came to his wife as a healthy handsome man. When she saw him, she insisted that he appears to her in his original condition of leprosy. She did not wish her Ikhlaas to be contaminated

with any emotional desire. On her insistence, Allah Ta'ala returned Shakh Qarshi to his original state of leprosy.